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**RENÉ BENOIST
AND THE INSTRUCTION OF THE CATHOLIC LAITY**

by

Alison Ruth Carter

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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**Department of French
University of Durham**

2003



- 2 JUN 2004

ABSTRACT

René Benoist and the Instruction of the Catholic Laity

by Alison Ruth Carter

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (2003)

This thesis explores the work of Catholic theologian René Benoist (1521-1608); it concentrates in particular on Benoist's project to provide the laity with editions of vernacular religious texts in Counter-Reformation France and the reasons which lay behind this extensive and sometimes controversial publishing programme. All four chapters of the present work contribute to our understanding of Benoist's motivations and influences, his desire to instruct the masses, and the execution of his plans on a practical level.

The first chapter situates Benoist's agenda by re-evaluating his career through the use of the accounts of his contemporaries and the analysis of the assessments of later historians; it points clearly to the reasons for what has traditionally been regarded as his 'odd' behaviour. The second chapter then explores how the theologian operated as a writer and how he went about effecting his plans; it examines his style, approach as a writer, and the authorial strategies that he employed.

The second half of this thesis examines in detail certain of those works which formed Benoist's programme of instruction, providing an examination of his work as well as that of those who published vernacular editions of the same texts. Chapter 3 considers Benoist's activities concerning the Bible, whilst Chapter 4 focuses in particular on his work surrounding the Book of Hours, and, in addition, surveys the numerous other religious works published by Benoist in new French editions. Several appendices have been provided to support the final chapter's conclusions.

By using the evidence provided by a substantial number of primary sources, this thesis argues that Benoist was heavily influenced by currents of thought which had circulated in the pre-Reformation era, when no choice had to be made between the established Church and rupture.

for my parents

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Declaration

No part of the material contained in this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree in the University of Durham or any other university. A synthesis of the ideas in this thesis will be published in my forthcoming article ‘René Benoist: Scripture for the Catholic Masses’, in *Moderate Voices in the European Reformation*, ed. by Alec Ryrie and Luc Racaut (Aldershot: Ashgate).

Statement of Copyright

The copyright of this thesis rests with the author. No quotation from it should be published in any form, including electronic and the Internet, without the author’s prior written consent. All information from this thesis must be acknowledged appropriately.

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Above all, I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Jennifer Britnell for her advice and support over the last three years; her enthusiasm and encouragement at all stages have been greatly appreciated, as has her sense of humour. I would like to acknowledge the influence of her unpublished departmental booklet 'The French Bible in the Sixteenth Century: An Anthology of Prefaces and Extracts' (Department of French, University of Durham) on the present work: it formed the starting point for the third chapter of this thesis and, in fact, the entire project.

I am grateful to the members of staff in the University of Durham who have consistently attended my research seminars and taken an interest in the various topics I have researched; my thanks extend in particular to Dr. M. Harvey. In the School of Modern European Languages, I would like to thank Professor J. A. Moss and Dr P. Macardle for their encouragement. I would also like to thank the School's administrator and support staff; my thanks go especially to Ms D. Ward and Mrs H. Fenwick. I am also very grateful to all those, in the School and beyond, who have helped in my battles against failing technology.

I am indebted to the numerous librarians and curators of libraries and museums in England, Scotland and France who have granted access to the many rare works consulted in the course of this Ph.D.; my thanks go above all to the members of staff in Duke Humfrey's Library in Oxford for their patience and understanding.

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My final thanks go to my proofreaders – Jenny Burns (Chapters 1 and 2), Richard Brewster (Chapter 2 and part of Chapter 3) and Dominic Carter (Chapters 1 to 4) – for their time and comments; I would like to thank Dominic in particular for so patiently reading all four chapters.

Foreword

Quotations

Throughout this thesis, quotations from fifteenth-, sixteenth- and seventeenth-century works are given in their original spelling and punctuation, although I differentiate between the letters *i* and *j* and *u* and *v*, supply apostrophes, expand printers' contractions, and, if the understanding of the original is otherwise impeded, modernise the spelling and punctuation. I normalise quotations cited by modern historians in the same manner.

Because the works referred to in this study are often unavailable in modern editions, lengthy quotations are frequently provided in the footnotes to this thesis.

Abbreviations

Primary sources

Benoist's publications

The titles of René Benoist's works are usually lengthy and sometimes significantly so. A long title is therefore given for the first reference within a chapter to a work, thereafter a short title is used. The title in the first instance does not include Benoist's name or titles, which the theologian normally added to the end of the publication's title, unless there is special interest in their inclusion. Fuller titles are provided in my bibliography, although where the title is very long, I provide an abbreviated title. Shelf-marks are provided in my bibliography, and, if necessary to distinguish between copies, in the chapters of the thesis.

If I refer to a Benoist work but have not consulted it myself, I use the spelling provided by the secondary source for the quotation and abbreviated title; I also provide the number given to the work by Émile Pasquier in his bibliography of Benoist's publications.¹ For example, 'PQ145' refers to Pasquier's 145th entry, Benoist's Book of Hours. I provide Pasquier's numbering elsewhere if it aids clarity and helps to distinguish between works.

French Bibles and New Testaments

The titles of early-printed French Bibles can be lengthy and are often similar; I do not give them within the thesis, unless a specific point is being made which in some way involves the wording of the title. Instead, I provide the number given in Bettye Chambers' bibliography;² frequently, Chambers' code is also given. For instance, 'C371, B1566nyv' refers to the translation numbered and listed as the 371st item in Chambers;³ the code indicates that it is a complete Bible and, according to its title-page, published in 1566 by Nyvelle. Other prefixes to the code are 'N' (New Testament), 'BA' (*Bible abrégée*), 'BH' (*Bible historique*), 'BP' (*Biblia Pauperum*), 'BExp' (*Exposicion de la Bible*), and 'BExt' (Biblical extracts). The three-lettered suffix refers to the printer or publisher, or, exceptionally, to a famous translator; if several parties are involved, names are separated by a hyphen. Bracketed information has been provided by Chambers.⁴ I provide the full titles of all Scriptural translations consulted in my bibliography; editions are listed in chronological order.

¹ Émile Pasquier, *Un curé de Paris pendant les guerres de Religion: René Benoist, le Pape des Halles (1521-1608). Étude historique et bibliographique* (Paris: Alphonse Picard & Fils, 1913), pp. 319-76.

² Bettye Thomas Chambers, *Bibliography of French Bibles: Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century French-Language Editions of the Scriptures* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1983).

³ Works are listed chronologically.

⁴ For further details, see Chambers, pp. iii-iv.

Books of Hours

Books of Hours usually have very similar titles. In Chapter 4 and its appendices, the full titles of Books of Hours will only be provided if there is special interest in doing so; otherwise an abbreviated title or code will be given. Vernacular Hours are identified by a simple code such as ‘Boursette 1554’; this indicates that, according to its title-page, the edition was published by Boursette in 1554. If a translator or editor is identified on the title-page – either Pierre Gringore or René Benoist – the name precedes that of the publisher’s and if several publishers are involved, all surnames are provided; if more than one edition from one particular year is referred to, I designate a number in brackets which follows the year of publication. The titles of Latin *Officia* are referenced in the following manner: [Office of the Virgin Mary] (place of publication: publisher, year of publication); traditional Latin *Horae* are referenced in a similar way, indicating Use if possible. Full titles of editions cited can be found in my bibliography. Shelf-marks are given within the chapter if it is necessary to distinguish between copies or editions. The shelf-marks of all Hours consulted are provided in the bibliography as are the full titles of editions specifically referred to in this thesis.

Other abbreviations

BL	British Library
BnF	Bibliothèque nationale de France
Bod	Bodleian Library
C	Chambers (see above)
Harris Manchester	Harris Manchester College Library, Oxford University
JR	John Rylands Library, Manchester University
PH	Pusey House Library, Oxford University
PQ	Pasquier (see above)

INTRODUCTION

Although Catholic theologian René Benoist (1521-1608) was an influential figure in Paris for much of the latter half of the sixteenth century, few studies have focused in any detail on his career; his many publications have also been dismissed and sometimes entirely overlooked. Émile Pasquier's biography, published some ninety years ago, remains the main point of reference for historians¹ and, although this provides a thorough examination of many episodes in Benoist's long and eventful life, a re-evaluation is overdue, particularly in the light of the advances that have been made more recently in the area of Catholic response to the Reformation. Historians have begun to recognise the need to redress the lack of work on the Counter-Reformation authors operating in France and to reassess the merits of their contributions;² this study supplements the increasing body of research in this area by concentrating on several important aspects of Benoist's career and of his publishing output that have to date remained unrecognised or misunderstood.

In spite of the fact that Benoist has been studied very little, his career and works provide numerous avenues of research; this can be demonstrated by even the briefest account of his life. In the early 1560s, Benoist was the confessor of Mary, Queen of Scots; later in that decade, he became the *curé* of the populous Parisian parish of St Eustache, a position which he held for around forty years and from which he gained the nickname of the '*Pape des Halles*'. During the Wars of Religion, he preached a line significantly more moderate than many other Parisian *curés* and retained his independence from the League, whilst consistently

¹ Pasquier, *Un curé de Paris*. (For complete bibliographical details, see Foreword, note 1.)

² See, for instance, Luc Racaut, *Hatred in Print: Catholic Propaganda and Protestant Identity during the French Wars of Religion* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), which follows work such as G. Wylie Sypher's "'Faisant ce qu'il leur vient à plaisir": The Image of Protestantism in French Catholic Polemic on the Eve of the Religious Wars', *Sixteenth Century Journal* (Summer 1980), 59-84 and Denis Crouzet's *Les Guerriers de Dieu*, 2 vols (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 1990); see Racaut, p. 5.



showing loyalty to the crown. He was appointed by King Charles IX as the first *lecteur royal* in Theology from 1572. Under King Henri IV, the rewards for his loyalty were even greater: he became the royal confessor following Henri's conversion to Catholicism, was nominated as the Bishop of Troyes and, supported by the king, took up the position of Dean of the Faculty of Theology in Paris from 1598. At the same time, Benoist was by far the most voluminous of the French Counter-Reformation authors;³ his publications, for the most part in the vernacular, include polemical tracts attacking Protestantism, as well as devotional and didactic works – both were useful tools for members of the Catholic laity, either as weapons to be used against the heretic or shields to defend and strengthen their faith.

However, amongst his many activities, Benoist is perhaps best known for publishing a French Bible in the 1560s; it is this aspect of his career which, if any, has been the subject of research since Pasquier's work. At the time, the publication of a French Bible for a Catholic readership provoked much controversy, as all Scriptural translations had been banned by the Faculty of Theology in Paris from the 1520s. Both his contemporaries and modern historians have struggled to understand the motivations behind his actions; indeed, there were several other incidents in the theologian's career (for instance, regarding the line that he took with the League and the monarchy), which have been viewed as inexplicable quirks or weaknesses within his character, and which have puzzled commentators through the centuries. This thesis aims in part to explain these 'quirks' and to establish the reasons for Benoist's behaviour. The research which follows initially began as an attempt to understand the theologian's activities surrounding the publication of a vernacular Bible and subsequently widened to include publications that he himself associated with the Bible project; several distinctive patterns began to emerge. It will be argued that an examination of Benoist's actions, rather than his eccentricity or character flaws, reveals that his

³ My thanks to Dr Alexander Wilkinson, Director of the Sixteenth-Century French Book Project, Reformation Studies Institute, St Andrews University, who confirms that Benoist's publishing

behaviour was remarkably consistent with certain beliefs and that he was attempting to bring about renewal within the Catholic Church; he was in fact influenced by currents of thought from a previous era, which in no way compromised his orthodoxy. Indeed, the theologian had formulated a coherent programme of instruction for the Catholic laity that was related to these beliefs, and his commitment to this sometimes resulted in clashes with the authorities of his own Church. An examination of his programme of vernacular religious works for the masses reveals more precisely the nature of the influences which acted upon Benoist from the earliest stages of his publishing career in the late 1550s to its conclusion in 1608 upon his death.

This thesis is divided into four chapters, which explore Benoist's motivations, his desire to instruct the masses, and the execution of his plans on a practical level. The first chapter, a re-evaluation of Benoist's career, surveys the opinions held of the theologian by his contemporaries and then evaluates the assessments of later historians; this represents the only sustained attempt to update the work of Pasquier so far. This chapter underlines the importance of several of Benoist's activities both politically and religiously, shows the dilemmas he faced and suggests why the theologian behaved in the manner he did. The second chapter then turns to the subject of Benoist as a writer. No single study has yet investigated Benoist's style, his approach as a writer, or the authorial methods and strategies that he employed; this chapter contributes at least the first step towards a more thorough enquiry, although, because of the large number of works written by Benoist, there remains scope for further research in this area. The chapter lays the foundations for an understanding of how the theologian effected his publishing plans, as well as demonstrating the agenda that lay behind his publications.

Chapters 3 and 4 examine certain of Benoist's vernacular religious works in detail within the context of those of the same genre published by others in the early

modern period. The second half of the thesis thus presents the results of studying a significant number of primary sources – early-printed French Bibles for Chapter 3 and Books of Hours in the case of Chapter 4.⁴ In Chapter 3, a close analysis of Benoist's Bible project is provided. This extends the research already completed in the areas of Benoist's French Bible and the evolution of the French Bible in general, through an examination of the paratext of the Benoist Bible and of medieval, humanist, evangelical, Protestant and other Catholic Bibles in French. The chapter concentrates in particular on paratextual additions in the form of prefaces and other related material; this contributes to our understanding of Benoist's preoccupations as well as the concerns of other authors of paratextual material found in French Bibles, whether they are translators, editors or printers. The theologian's influences and his influence upon subsequent producers of vernacular Bibles are also traced. Finally, the chapter concludes with a consideration of Benoist's attitude to vernacular Bibles as expressed in a range of his works which have hitherto been overlooked, and so offers a wider view than studies have previously permitted. Chapter 4 deals with publications which Benoist clearly associated with his Bible project, including French versions of saints' lives, of Ludolphus of Saxony's *Vita Christi*, and of the Book of Hours. After a general overview of this programme of works, the second, larger section of the chapter concentrates on the French Book of Hours. The main emphasis lies on vernacular Hours in the latter half of the sixteenth century and Benoist's contribution to this area, although, as with Chapter 3, the work carried out provides insights into the impulses and influences lying behind works of the same genre published by others. This contextualisation is particularly important for the topic of Books of Hours because of the lack of research carried out to date on sixteenth-century Hours in the vernacular. Because of the absence of work completed in this area, Chapter 4 contains perhaps the most significant conclusions of this thesis in terms of its contribution to the body of work on Counter-Reformation authors, although the findings are in some cases intended as

⁴ See my bibliography for further details. As can be seen from the bibliography, a substantial number of Benoist's works of all types have also been examined; these are used throughout the

tentative suggestions rather than definitive answers. Several appendices have been added to reinforce and supplement the conclusions reached in Chapter 4.

As has been indicated above, this study contextualises several important strands of René Benoist's work and in so doing provides conclusions which relate to subjects other than Benoist alone; however, the main concern is to establish the influences acting upon this particular theologian, the resulting programme of instruction he had in mind for the masses and how he succeeded in effecting an ambitious project in a period in which, convention would have us believe, it was unwise to behave in a way other than that prescribed by one's Church. His publishing output certainly took him beyond the bounds of what one might expect to be prudent; his refusal to renounce his French Bible led to ejection from the Parisian Faculty of Theology and a strongly-worded papal condemnation. As Chapter 3 shows in particular, he quite determinedly defied the authorities in Paris and Rome.

Throughout, this thesis explores the paradox of an orthodox Catholic theologian who was a well-known opponent of heresy, but who was receptive, as we shall see, to currents of thought more closely associated with those of movements active in the pre-Reformation rather than Counter-Reformation period. In addition, it outlines the response of a Counter-Reformation theologian to several of the dilemmas he faced which resulted from a commitment to his king and his Church. Benoist's adversaries were within both the Protestant and Catholic Churches: he had to confront problems such as the spread of Protestantism, abuses amongst the Catholic clergy and the alienation of the laity. By considering his particular strategies for reform and renewal, it becomes apparent that spiritual renewal within the Catholic Church in the late sixteenth century took a multiplicity of forms.

The approach by which I have chosen to explore material correlates closely with that of many other recent studies which fall within the parameters of the History of the Book. This methodology, best exemplified in influential works concerning the advent of the printing press,⁵ takes a wide perspective, examining a number of interrelated areas, including the material history of books and their historical contexts, the examination of various elements beyond the central text which form a book, the impulses behind publication and, of course, reception.⁶

⁵ See, for instance, Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-Modern Europe*, 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

⁶ See Ann Moss, 'New Ways of Looking at Texts', in *L'Étude de la Renaissance nunc et cras. Actes du colloque de la Fédération internationale des Sociétés et Instituts d'Étude de la Renaissance (FISIER). Genève, septembre 2001*, ed. by Max Engammare and others (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 2003), pp. 143-58 (p. 147).

CHAPTER 1

René Benoist: A Re-evaluation

Many words have been used to describe René Benoist and his actions, both during and after his lifetime. Some have attempted to categorise him either as a *Politique* or a *Ligueur*. Others, noting his divergence from the norm, have used words such as ‘wayward’ and ‘mad’.¹ One contemporary thought him a ‘dangerous fox’.² As his biographer aptly comments, ‘[Benoist] a été diversement jugé par les historiens modernes comme par ses contemporains’.³ We have already noted in the introduction that Émile Pasquier’s 1913 biography charts the theologian’s long and sometimes remarkable life in a comprehensive manner; in doing so, it examines the observations of Benoist’s contemporaries and assesses those of historians up to and including the beginning of the twentieth century. The chief preoccupation of this chapter will be firstly to reassess Benoist by establishing his relations with various groups such as his parishioners, peers, Rome, and the monarchy. This will be achieved by returning to the ‘voices’ of his contemporaries rather than simply relying on the interpretation which has subsequently been applied by modern historians. Secondly, with the voices of the primary sources firmly in mind, this chapter aims to re-evaluate Benoist through an analysis of the assessment of modern historians and ‘post-Pasquier’ thought.

¹ Wayward: Joseph Bergin, *The Making of the French Episcopate 1589-1661* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), p. 216; mad (‘fou’): Amédée Boinet, *Les Églises parisiennes*, 3 vols ([Paris]: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1958-64), I (1958), 468. Boinet refers us to the work of Leroux de Lincy as regards ‘fou’.

² [Yves Magistri], *Le réveil-matin et mot du guet des bons catholiques, par Jean de la Mothe Escuyer* (Douai, 1591), cited in Pasquier, *Un curé de Paris*, p. 217. Despite what is often meticulous research (see note 4 below), Pasquier seldom provides full references to his primary and secondary sources; I endeavour to provide as much information as can be gleaned from his work when relying on his use of manuscripts and printed material that I have not been able to access. He frequently omits to cite the publishers of printed material and the total number of volumes in a collection, and can be vague as to page numbers.

³ Pasquier, p. 9.

This will illustrate the evolution – and more recently, revolution – as regards the body of opinion on Benoist.

By the end of the chapter, it will be evident that Benoist's behaviour can be ascribed to something other than eccentricity, irrationality, weakness or inconsistency. Indeed, the theologian's actions are largely those of a politically astute operator, who, though working in the public eye in difficult times, consistently displays an independent standpoint which is not *Ligueur*, *Politique*, or 'suspect'. His exploits, as we shall see, demonstrate the unhelpfulness – and sometimes irrelevance – of such categories. If we seek to attribute labels, as has been indicated in the introduction to this thesis, we should turn to the vocabulary of a period much earlier in the sixteenth century, when frontiers between the orthodoxy or otherwise of doctrinal opinions were very unstable.

1

Contemporary judgements

a) Career

Let us commence by building on the short account of Benoist's career that has already been given. According to Pasquier, Benoist was born in Charonnières, near Angers, in 1521.⁴ His background was one of poverty and he was brought up

⁴ This is a brief survey of Benoist's life as found in Pasquier, pp. 19-313. Pasquier's account of Benoist's life before he moved to Paris is sketchy, no doubt due to the limited amount of documentation available to Pasquier covering this period and because of the greater interest in, and therefore emphasis on, Benoist's Paris career. As the only substantial work to date on Benoist, Pasquier's biography is relied upon here, as it is by all historians at present, and for good reason. Pasquier's work cannot be dismissed as unreliable or untrustworthy; it is thorough and his ample footnotes throughout indicate a great deal of research and the use of numerous sources; indeed, the sound scholarship involved resulted in recognition from the *Académie française*. (See, for example, Bernard Chédozeau, who finds Pasquier's work excellent, particularly the bibliography: Bernard Chédozeau, *La Bible et la liturgie en français: L'Église tridentine et les traductions bibliques et liturgiques (1600-1789)* (Paris: Cerf, 1990), p.155, n. 73.) The weakest chapters in

to be a shepherd. However, he rejected the humble career path set before him by his parents and ran away from home. Benoist worked his way through college and gained entry to the University of Angers, where he turned to Theology after initially showing interest in Medicine. He gained his first doctorate at Angers and it was whilst at this university that he began to pursue a vocation in the ranks of the French Catholic Church. Although interested in what Pasquier terms ‘les idées nouvelles’,⁵ he was subsequently appointed ‘délégué pour la défense de la foi’ in 1556 by France’s Inquisitor General, Matthieu Ory.⁶

terms of primary sources are those covering Benoist’s early life and his year in Scotland as the confessor of Mary, Queen of Scots.

⁵ Pasquier, p. 35. This conclusion derives from a reference made in one of Benoist’s prefaces to a work originally added to a Latin Bible edited by the theologian and printed around 1564 (PQ156). Benoist appears to be interested in the new style of writing – which is also in French – and not the new ideas within the texts. He is particularly supportive of the criticism directed at abuses within the Catholic Church, which he himself will not tolerate: ‘Non dissimulabo (Christiane) me à primis annis equidem (inter summos omnis generis haereticorum impiorum et impurorum osos educatus) satis diligenter, curiosèque non sine summa animi mei oblectatione in haereticorum (quos cane peius et angue semper oderam) scriptis multis de causis versatum esse. Videbam enim eos (quod plurimos alliciebat) quicquid tentarent sive Latinè, sive Gallicè agerent, illud ipsum nitidè, tersè, diligenter, splendidè, et omni denique ex arte praestare et perficere: in nostris autem omnia, aut fere omnia contraria non absque animi summo moerore cernebam. Mihi placebant maximè quia Catholicorum, et maximè Ecclesiasticorum abusus (quos semper tanquam praesentium calamitatum occasionem et Ecclesiastici decoris ruinam vehementer sum detestatus) nullo pacto tolerandos verè notabant et percellabant.’ This transcription is taken from one of the many reprinted and slightly modified versions of the text (see Chapter 3, note 242), Benoist’s *Locorum praecipuorum sacrae Scripturae, tam Veteris quam Novi Testamenti, quibus corruptis inscitè, et pravè detortis abutuntur huius tempestatis haeretici apollionistae contra fidem catholicam, et veritatem evangelicam conquisitio, et catholica expositio, quae christianorum adversus omnes nunc vigentes haereses, panoplia meritò dici potest. Opus cum omnibus Scripturae sacrae studiosis, tum maximè concionatoribus catholicis, et ecclesiasticis quibuslibet perutile: atque potissimum iis quibus cum haereticis frequens est disputatio necessarium. Duobus additis ad calcem stromatis: uno de obedientia verè fidelium, et rebellione infidelium haereticorum: altero de idololatria coenae Calvinicae* (Paris: Chesneau, 1576), ‘Praefatio ad lectorem christianum’, fol. ã4^r.

⁶ Pasquier, p. 35. On the Inquisitors of the Faith and Matthieu Ory, see Francis M. Higman, *Censorship and the Sorbonne: A Bibliographical Study of Books in French Censured by the Faculty of Theology of the University of Paris, 1520-1551* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1979), pp. 21-22. James Farge lists Ory’s appointment to the position of Inquisitor General in 1536 as one of a series of actions by Francis I aimed at suppressing heresy: ‘The king found it politically advantageous to pursue a policy of conciliation with German Protestant princes, and he asked the Paris doctors about a religious colloquy with Lutheran theologians. Historians who see this as a return to a policy of toleration also point to the Edict of Coucy, which allowed religious fugitives to return to France. But this edict insisted that the accused abjure their heresy totally and threatened the most severe penalties against anyone who relapsed. Moreover, Francis I appointed Doctor Matthieu Ory as inquisitor general for all France on 30 May 1536. He also named a special prosecutor to punish heretics, Anglebert Claussé, whose gesture of showing the Faculty his commission from the king greatly gratified the doctors.’ James K. Farge, *Orthodoxy and Reform*

Benoist left Angers for Paris. In 1556, he became a member of the Parisian Faculty of Theology, now commonly known as the Sorbonne,⁷ where he was a student and then a *docteur régent* at the Collège de Navarre. His student life was not without incident: his *thèse de licence* caused a stir when he decided to put it into print, thus rendering it difficult to remove any sentiments deemed as suspect by the examiners. One such phrase was questioned by the Faculty: ‘Peut-être le Christ porta-t-il, en son corps, même les iniquités des démons.’⁸ Nevertheless, by 1559, he had gained a second doctorate in Theology in Paris.

Shortly after becoming a *docteur régent* at his college, the theologian’s successful career began in earnest. Benoist travelled to Scotland in 1561 in the capacity of confessor to Mary, Queen of Scots; he remained there for a year.⁹ In 1568, he was appointed as the *curé* of St Eustache in Paris; he successfully took charge of this important parish despite some competition for the position during the first few months of his tenure. His nickname, the ‘*Pape des Halles*’, which he acquired because of his activities as a *curé*, bears witness to his popularity and power. He actively ran this parish and operated from it as a strategic power base until 1607, when he felt too ill to fulfil his pastoral duties and so installed a successor of whom he approved.

Benoist campaigned for the creation of a *lecteur royal* in Theology. The post was established by King Charles IX and promptly awarded to the theologian in December 1572. Two decades later, after playing a key role in the proceedings that surrounded the abjuration of King Henri IV in July 1593, he was named as the king’s confessor. He then accumulated the titles of *conseiller du Roi* and

in *Early Reformation France: The Faculty of Theology of Paris, 1500-1543* (Leiden: Brill, 1985), pp. 207-08.

⁷ As Farge points out, the use of the name ‘Sorbonne’ to denote the Parisian Faculty of Theology is incorrect. The term will therefore be avoided in this work. Farge, pp. 3-4.

⁸ Pasquier, p. 44. This section is inadequately explained and footnoted by Pasquier.

⁹ The Cardinal of Lorraine is usually named as the sponsor who brought about this appointment. See, for instance, Alain Tallon, *La France et le Concile de Trente (1518-1563)* (Rome: École française de Rome, 1997), p. 568.

conseiller d'État, the latter of these two being the more important, although his attendance at meetings seems to have been irregular. The king also nominated Benoist as bishop to the See of Troyes in September 1593, although he was never granted the necessary papal bulls to confirm the appointment, nor those to the See of Angers, another bishopric for which he tried to gain papal support. After a decade of political manoeuvrings by Henri IV and his diplomats, Benoist resigned his claim. However, he could comfort himself with the position of *gouverneur de Navarre*, which he gained in conjunction with his duties as the royal confessor. From this position, Benoist was able to control many of the proceedings of the Collège de Navarre, his former college. In 1598, his power in the university increased when he became the Dean of the Faculty of Theology. He held this position for 10 years until his death in March 1608.

Throughout his career, contemporaries and historians agree that the '*Pape des Halles*' worked tirelessly amongst his parishioners. He had a reputation for being a talented preacher and was a prolific writer of polemic and of texts of a devotional nature, publishing over 200 works, of which more than 90% were written in the vernacular.¹⁰ His main preoccupations were to defend Catholicism and attack Protestant heretics.¹¹ His target audience was not the ecclesiastical elite, but rather the literate laity; his unusually high proportion of works in the vernacular demonstrates this. In addition to pamphleteering activities unequalled in volume by contemporaries,¹² he could claim to be the first Catholic to produce an up-to-date and accurate translation of the Bible in French.

¹⁰ See Pasquier's bibliography, pp. 319-76. It is hard to determine the precise number of works involved; Pasquier sometimes separates multiple works originally published as one volume, leading to overestimation, but, on the other hand, because of the ephemeral nature of certain of Benoist's works, it is likely that Pasquier has been unable to provide a complete bibliography. I do not include reprints in calculations, but it should be remembered that Benoist at times 'recycled' material in later publications, modifying his texts to a greater or lesser extent; I consider these as separate works.

¹¹ The titles of his works indicate this; see Pasquier's bibliography.

¹² See Introduction, note 3.

This outline of Benoist's career is sufficient to indicate his importance. However, I should like to highlight the significance of a small number of these offices and activities very briefly in order to underscore his impact on political and religious life before moving on to an examination of the judgements made by Benoist's contemporaries and by modern historians concerning Benoist. The following aspects are usually those of principal interest to historians when discussing the theologian.

Firstly, as *curé* of St Eustache, Benoist exerted great influence in times of serious political and religious unrest over what was arguably Paris's most important parish. Henri IV reportedly called St Eustache 'la première cure de sa bonne ville de Paris'.¹³

Secondly, Benoist gained the nomination as *curé* of St Eustache two years after publishing his French Bible in 1566. This translation, which is discussed later in detail, represented a highly controversial break with the position of the French Catholic Church. Exile or execution could result from vernacular Bible translation in Western Europe in the sixteenth century.¹⁴ Benoist escaped both, and, moreover, the text of this version of the Bible was the basis for French Catholic translations into the next century. As has been indicated in the introduction to this thesis, the scandal surrounding this controversy has been the subject of several modern studies.¹⁵

¹³ *Mémoires historiques par feu M. Bruys*, 2 vols (Paris, 1751), II, 298, cited in Pasquier, p. 305, n. 3.

¹⁴ M. H. Black, 'The Transition to the Seventeenth Century', under 'The Printed Bible', in *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, ed. by P. R. Ackroyd and others, 3 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963-70), III: *The West from the Reformation to the Present Day*, ed. by S. L. Greenslade (1963), 449.

¹⁵ For example, see Paul Maria Baumgarten, *René Benoist und seine französische Bibel von 1566* (Krumbach: Franz Aker, 1927); Carlo de Clercq, 'La Bible française de René Benoist', *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* (1957), 168-74; Francis Higman, 'Les *Advertissemens* des Bibles de René Benoist (1566, 1568)', in his *Lire et découvrir: La Circulation des idées au temps de la Réforme* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1998), pp. 563-71.

Thirdly, Francis Higman's work has underlined the original nature of Benoist's publishing career. He points out that Benoist was amongst the very first of the French Catholic theologians to engage with Protestants in French as opposed to Latin on points of doctrine.¹⁶ Higman is particularly interested in Benoist's statement that one can use the work of heretics, as long as they have been 'purged' and 'purified'.¹⁷ In terms of quantity alone, the '*Pape des Halles*' led the field in French Counter-Reformation pamphleteering, and, of course, his side was victorious. Benoist played a successful part in the battle to keep France Catholic.

Fourthly, recent research by Thierry Wanegffelen points to Benoist's role in the conversion of Henri IV as being pivotal.¹⁸ Without this conversion, Henri IV would have experienced many more obstacles to taking the French crown and the Bourbon line might not have secured the throne.

On a final note, Benoist, as Dean of the Faculty of Theology, permitted important reforms to be made to the institution. Pasquier indicates that 'la réforme de l'Université n'était que du gallicanisme en action' and sees the changes as '[une] sorte de sécularisation'; the reforms sought to bring the institution under the control of French, as opposed to papal, authorities.¹⁹

b) Sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century views

Benoist was, without question, a high-profile figure in both political and ecclesiastical circles. It is natural for such figures to provoke comment in their lifetime and Benoist provides no exception. As he found throughout his career and particularly when he published a French Bible, he had to combat two

¹⁶ Francis Higman, 'Theology in French: Religious Pamphlets from the Counter-Reformation', in *Lire et découvrir*, pp. 353-70 (p. 365).

¹⁷ Higman, '*Advertissemens*', pp. 569-71.

¹⁸ Thierry Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome ni Genève: Des fidèles entre deux chaires en France au XVI^e siècle* (Paris: Éditions Champion, 1997), pp. 424-25.

¹⁹ Pasquier, pp. 262-64 (pp. 264, 263).

opponents: firstly, Protestants, and secondly, Catholics who held views at variance to his own. Pasquier's biography shows a sharp dichotomy of opinion concerning Benoist.²⁰ He was one of the greatest living French theologians and a man of virtue to his supporters, of whom the most important were Pierre de Gondy (the Bishop of Paris) and the monarchy. Catholic opponents, especially during the League, were unsure as to whether he was a *Politique* or a heretic.

i) Support for Benoist

Judgements at the time of the theologian's death

Firstly, let us consider the views of Benoist's admirers. On his death in 1608, two texts were published extolling the virtues of Benoist: the funeral oration delivered by Pierre Victor Cayet – a well-known theologian – and G. Gérard's *Tombeau de M. René Benoist*.²¹ Gérard – a somewhat obscure figure – describes Benoist in admiring terms, as 'Pasteur, l'honneur des Doctes, clair et luisant Soleil, qui des rayons de son sçavoir à fait voir la lumiere où ne logeoient que des tenebres'.²² He writes extensively about Benoist's impeccable way of life, virtue, integrity and reputation. As a pastor, he was wise and pious;²³ he was 'tout consacré au

²⁰ As explained previously, Pasquier's work is extremely thorough, both in terms of the analysis of Benoist's work and views held of Benoist (see, for example, note 4 above). I therefore frequently use Pasquier for the survey of contemporary thought on Benoist, although I do not always agree with his conclusions drawn from the views presented. I have followed up Pasquier where possible, but am sometimes driven to rely on him alone, particularly for archive references.

²¹ Pierre Victor Cayet, *Oraison funebre, sur le trespas regrettable, et enterrement honorable de reverend, venerable et scientifique messire René Benoist, curé de Saint Eustache, confesseur du roy nostre sire, son conseiller en ses conseils d'estat et privé, et doyen de la sacrée Faculté de Theologie à Paris. Prononcée dans S. Eustache, à l'heure et office divin de son enterrement, dans ladite eglise, le lundy 10 mars 1608. Par M. Pierre Victor Cayet, docteur en ladite Faculté sacrée de Theologie, et lecteur du roy* (Paris: Bourriquant, [1608]); G. Gérard, *Tombeau de M. René Benoist conseiller et confesseur du roy, doyen en la sacree Faculté de Theologie, et curé de S. Eustache à Paris. Avec son epitaphe. A Messieurs de S. Eustache. Par G. Gérard, Ardenois* (Paris: Colin, 1608).

²² Gérard, p. 6.

²³ Gérard, p. 9.

bien de sa patrie, voire mesme en sa mort, il veille encore sur sa paroisse'.²⁴

Benoist is portrayed as a talented man, in exaggerated terms:

Ce tout sçavant Mercure, à qui dès l'aage tendre
 Vous [les Muses] fistes les secrets de vos beaux arts apprendre [...]
 Celuy dont les vertus et le sçavoir encore,
 Pour bornes de leur gloire ont eu tout l'univers,

Muses que vous perdez, que vous perdez mignonnes,
 Perdant ce brave Athlete orné des neufs couronnes [...]²⁵

Cayet outlines Benoist's career and is comprehensive in his appreciation of Benoist. Benoist was hardworking, a great and worthy pastor of the Church, who continually prayed, read, preached and wrote, as befits the *bon docteur*.²⁶ In his pastoral duties, he was 'soigneux de ses oüailles'.²⁷ Equally, he proved himself a good royal confessor, serving 'sans flatterie ny dissimulation'.²⁸

When discussing Benoist's confessional leanings, Cayet is keen to portray Benoist as a faithful servant to the Catholic Church, remarking 'ils [Protestants] ont eu en luy un antagoniste rigoureux et bon-tenant de l'Eglise'.²⁹ He insists on Benoist's orthodoxy and obedience to Rome: 'Il a tousjours enseigné la loy Apostolique, et demeuré en l'obeïssance de la Sainte Eglise Romaine [...]'.³⁰ However, in addition, Benoist's commitment was, according to Cayet, to the Gallican Church. Cayet describes 'son zele grand à maintenir la vraye doctrine et discipline de l'Eglise, et aussi à conserver **la liberté de l'Eglise Gallicane** parmi tant d'impetuosité des guerres civiles, par lesquelles il a esté grandement examiné; et neantmoins il a singulierement conservé l'honneur et reverence deuë au S. Siege [...]'.³¹ Even more specifically, on a local level, Benoist served his parish well. Cayet highlights 'le bel ordre et police qu'il a mise en ceste Eglise

²⁴ Gérard, p. 8.

²⁵ Gérard, p. 11.

²⁶ Cayet, p. 7.

²⁷ Cayet, p. 14.

²⁸ Cayet, p. 15.

²⁹ Cayet, p. 11.

³⁰ Cayet, p. 19.

³¹ Cayet, pp. 11-12. My highlighting.

[...] de S. Eustache, laquelle tant par les offices divins que par les predications, il a tellement réglée que c'est comme la patronne des autres paroisses.³²

Not everyone was impressed by the work of Gérard and Cayet. Pierre de L'Estoile dismisses Gérard's work as 'pure bagatelle'.³³ His assessment of Cayet's funeral oration, which is written in fractionally less hyperbolic terms, is scarcely less dismissive, as he liberally points out its shortcomings and factual errors.³⁴ As L'Estoile comments, 'en telles matières, on se dispense quelquefois de mentir'.³⁵ On such an occasion, embellishment and excessive language are perhaps to be expected. Further examination of L'Estoile's entries reveals that his criticism here is principally a reflection on the overblown nature of the comments of Gérard and Cayet and not on Benoist's good character.

Returning to Cayet's work, the insistence on Benoist's credentials as a good Catholic is probably a response to those who questioned Benoist's orthodoxy, a phenomenon no doubt known to Cayet, who was a convert to Catholicism. However, Cayet's funeral oration reveals the dilemma in which Benoist found himself: loyalty to both Rome and the Gallican Church was often difficult during the period covered by Benoist's career. An additional complication for Benoist is also in evidence from Cayet's words, for a further facet of Benoist's allegiances is apparent. Cayet remarks that despite prayers and menaces to the theologian to abandon allegiance to the monarchy, 'il y est tousjours demeuré ferme comme un roc',³⁶ presumably pointing to the fact that Benoist did not favour the League. Thus, within Cayet's funeral oration lies the crux of the problem. Benoist strove to be faithful to Rome, whilst being an enthusiastic supporter of the rights of the Gallican Church and the French monarchy. In addition to this, Cayet notes

³² Cayet, p. 11.

³³ Pierre de L'Estoile, *Mémoires-Journaux 1574-1611*, ed. by G. Brunet and others, 12 vols (Paris: Librairie des Bibliophiles, 1875-96; repr. Paris: Tallandier, 1982), IX, 56.

³⁴ L'Estoile, IX, 55.

³⁵ L'Estoile, IX, 55.

³⁶ Cayet, p. 15.

another important issue for this thesis: Benoist ran his parish with a reforming zeal.

Benoist's position as described by Cayet is problematic. For example, by assisting Henri IV at his conversion and acting as a faithful subject, Benoist was forced to act against orders he had received from the papal legate and thus Rome. Questions and debate over Benoist's true allegiances were raised during his lifetime and continue to the present day. At the heart of this debate of how to reconcile Benoist's loyalties lies the question mark over his true religious beliefs.

The laity

If we consider Benoist's relationship with 'le peuple', we see that there is less debate as concerns the attitude shown to Benoist by his parishioners. His nickname ('*Pape des Halles*') confirms his popularity. Even the frequently sceptical L'Estoile comments that Benoist was 'bon curé et docte, craind et aimé de ses paroissiens; grand théologien et prédicateur, et qui de tous preschoit le plus purement, retenu par la timidité seule, qui estoit naturelle en lui, de faire encore mieux'.³⁷ To his parishioners, any questions as to his orthodoxy were not the principal concern. They appear to have responded to the merits (as described by Gérard and Cayet in what initially seemed to be inflated terms) of their priest. Indeed, his parishioners went so far as to defend him at the cost of their own personal safety. L'Estoile reports that 'une pauvre femme de la paroisse Saint-Eustace fut battue et foulée aux pieds, à Paris, par un Hespagnol, pour soustenir son Curé et avoir dit qu'il estoit dit qu'il estoit homme de bien.'³⁸ Cayet signals that Benoist's flock safeguarded him from his enemies.³⁹ There is also an account of a draper from St Eustache who dared to contradict one of Benoist's detractors,

³⁷ L'Estoile, IX, 54-55.

³⁸ 21 August 1593. L'Estoile, VI, 83. This is surely a reference to one amongst the numerous Spaniards who supported the League.

‘qui mêlait Benoist à ses médisances’.⁴⁰ That day, Pasquier remarks, the town was on the verge of riot. Thus, when tensions were at boiling point shortly after Henri IV’s abjuration, Benoist was protected by his parishioners.

Many sources speak of Benoist as a good man. His talents as a preacher and orator are also frequently mentioned. On his rare trips away from Paris, he would often preach at his host town. When in Angers in 1575, an eyewitness commented that ‘il était bien suivi en ses prédications en ladite église, la nef de laquelle était toujours pleine de peuple jusqu’à l’entrée de la porte’.⁴¹ Jehan Louvet records the successful preaching which converted numerous heretics in 1586.⁴² Furthermore, the Chapter of Notre-Dame invited Benoist to preach the Lenten sermons in 1583, although he declined.⁴³ This invitation confirms his preaching talents.

On a final note, Benoist inspired respect through his much attested hard work in the area of pastoral duties;⁴⁴ Benoist’s dedication was such that he remained in Paris during the plague of 1580.⁴⁵ It is no doubt this combination of positive attributes that helped to secure the loyalty of his parishioners.

³⁹ ‘[...] vous Messieurs ses paroissiens, luy avez tousjours fait si bonne escorte, que ceux qui avoient eu envie de lui nuire, ne l’auroient pû.’ Cayet, p. 15.

⁴⁰ 1 August 1593. *Journal de la Ligue du 17 mai au 6 novembre 1593* (*Revue rétrospective*, 1837). Pasquier, p. 229.

⁴¹ Jehan Louvet, *Journal ou récit véritable de tout ce qui est advenu digne de mémoire, depuis l’an 1560 jusqu’à l’an 1634* (*Revue d’Anjou*, 1854-56), cited in Pasquier, p. 171.

⁴² ‘[...] il y a un grand nombre qui se sont réduits à l’Eglise catholique, et ont quitté leur hérésie’. Louvet, cited in Pasquier, p. 175. Pasquier comments that these conversions were perhaps aided by the bishop’s recent profession of faith, following the king’s edict.

⁴³ Pasquier believes this refusal was based on medical grounds. Pasquier, p. 179.

⁴⁴ ‘Depuis qu’il est en sa charge, il a fait tel devoir que certainement les paroissiens n’avaient point vu avoir été fait auparavant, par perpétuelle residence et continuelles predications.’ (Benoist’s lawyer, Chippard, in Archives Nationales S 79¹⁸, *Procédures de Saint-Germain-l’Auxerrois*.) Pasquier, p. 177, n. 5.

⁴⁵ Pasquier, p. 163.

Colleagues and peers

Benoist's peers were more critical of Benoist, especially when behaviour relating to matters of religious belief was under the spotlight. However, there were numerous supporters. An official report was made on behalf of the pope at the time when Benoist sought papal bulls for Troyes; thirteen respected men ('Il vicario dell' Illustrissimo Gondi et alcuni altri di questa Città huomini vecchi, e di molta riputatione')⁴⁶ were asked about various aspects of Benoist, including his morals, learning, orthodoxy and work. Pasquier reports that the answers were highly complimentary.⁴⁷

Likewise, those who were not well disposed to Benoist recognised his merits. Benoist's colleagues at Troyes showed some resistance to his appointment as bishop. In addition, they were frustrated by having a bishop appointed by the king for whom the pope would not grant the necessary bulls. However, a letter from the canons to Rome speaks of Benoist's talents. His knowledge, eloquence, integrity and pastoral zeal are, for example, praised in most enthusiastic terms.⁴⁸ This could, however, form part of shrewd political manoeuvrings or be formulaic. Of more credence is the recognition of Benoist by the anonymous author of an angry tirade against Benoist's Bible, as an 'hominem eruditum, bene naturâ et dotatum et institutum, in litteris educatum, eloquentiae, jurisprudentiae et theologiae cognitione imbutum'.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Papal legate, 13 April 1597. Archives Vaticanes, *Nunziatura di Francia*, vol. 46, fol. 92. Pasquier, p. 281, n. 2.

⁴⁷ Pasquier, p. 281.

⁴⁸ 'Vir non modo reconditâ scientiâ clarus, eloquio pollens, vitae integritate insignis, sed etiam in animarum regimine totos quadraginta annos versatus idque Parisiis, qui diebus singulis ad populum, concione habita, tanta cum laude erat infirmum solidavit [sic] ... summa eruditione ac eloquentia, pari diligentia contentioneque animi disputando, scrutando, conferendo ut caeteris palmam praeripuisse jure merito censeatur [...]' (22 August 1594. Found in the documentation of the official report sent to Rome.) Pasquier, p. 276, n. 2. Pasquier appears to have mistranscribed part of the letter.

⁴⁹ *Observationes biblicorum lingua gallica editorum sub nomine M. Renati Benedicti* ([n.p.]: [n.pub.], [n.d.]). Pasquier, p. 133, n. 1. Pasquier believes the author to be Jacques Lefebvre, syndic of the Faculty of Theology.

The Bishop of Paris, Pierre de Gondi, was a staunch supporter of Benoist throughout his career. He supported Benoist's claim to St Eustache and he defended Benoist at the time of the Bible controversy, as well as his own position in supporting the translator, insisting in a letter to Pope Gregory XIII that 'Benoist a une doctrine pure; il défend l'Église contre les hérétiques [...]'.⁵⁰ Gondi's support suggests that they shared common ground in their approaches and beliefs. Both were close to the monarchy throughout their careers and physically close to Henri IV at St Denis. At the time of the Bible controversy, Salviati, the nuncio, reported to Rome that '[Gondi] considère l'ouvrage comme mauvais, tout en tenant l'auteur en très grande estime, à tel point qu'il lui donne la première place parmi les curés et docteurs de ce pays'.⁵¹

On a personal level, Benoist won the friendship of several of his peers. When Gabriel Dupuyherbault of the Order of Fontevrault died, he left behind a manuscript of saints' lives. An editor, keen to publish the work, handed it to Benoist, whom Dupuyherbault 'aimait, honorait et révérait beaucoup'.⁵² In addition to this, Pasquier cites an intriguing manuscript note left on a work by Benoist which reads 'quoi qu'il en soit, maistre René Benoist étoit bon ami et homme de bien'.⁵³

Benoist's appeal to his peers was on several levels. On a professional level, he worked hard for the Catholic Church and defended it vigorously. For some, his particular approach and beliefs were attractive. However, some appreciated him as a friend, even if they found his actions unpalatable.

⁵⁰ 1 September 1575. Pasquier, p. 103.

⁵¹ 25 October 1575. Pasquier, p. 105. Bergin notes 'Gondi's extensive efforts to defend and excuse Benoist' when Benoist was fighting for possession of Troyes at the end of the century (1597). Bergin, p. 407, n. 149.

⁵² Pasquier, p. 164.

⁵³ Pasquier, p. 59, n. 1.

The monarchy

Benoist found another source of support in the monarchy, with which he enjoyed sound relations: Charles IX appointed Benoist as the *lecteur royal* of Theology in 1572,⁵⁴ shortly after the theologian had been excluded from the Faculty of Theology in the controversy surrounding his Bible translation;⁵⁵ Henri III was reluctant to act against Benoist following the pope's censure of his French Bible in 1575⁵⁶ and later wrote a grateful letter to Benoist in praise of his constancy and for preaching obedience to the crown in troubled times.⁵⁷

Benoist's good relationship with the monarchy was thus well established when Henri IV acceded to the throne; his closest relationship with the monarchy was under this king. Henri IV wrote a complimentary letter to Benoist, requesting his presence at St Denis in the days that preceded his conversion. He wrote for a second time when Benoist did not appear. He clearly regarded the theologian as being strategically important and someone with whom he could work. His appreciation of Benoist was considerable: he appointed him as royal confessor and, as mentioned above, bishop.⁵⁸ His demands that Benoist be granted papal bulls lasted over a decade. Of course, this insistence was not merely a display of affection for Benoist; politics between Paris and Rome were inextricably linked to the affair. However, the king's increasingly frustrated letters to the parties concerned (especially his diplomats in Rome) show his esteem for Benoist.⁵⁹ He

⁵⁴ When in 1530 King François Ier established what would eventually become the *Collège royal de France*, the position of *lecteur royal* of Theology, which could have presented a challenge to the members of the Faculty of Theology, was not created.

⁵⁵ Pasquier, pp. 118-19.

⁵⁶ Pasquier, p. 102.

⁵⁷ Letter received on 27 March 1589, three months after Henri III's unpopular assassination of the Guise brothers. Pasquier, p. 200.

⁵⁸ Bergin notes that 'there are few signs to suggest that the king was in a special hurry to reward personal service, and some of his clerical supporters had to wait several years before claiming theirs [...] René Benoist [...] was exceptional in being given a diocese [...] as early as 1593 [...]'. Bergin, p. 393.

⁵⁹ 'The king's exasperation was so great that in 1603 he momentarily threatened to revert to the pre-1596 system under which the *grand conseil* could authorise those nominated to bishoprics to take possession and administer them.' Bergin, p. 406.

mentions the theologian's excellent qualities⁶⁰ and makes it extremely clear that he intends to protect a faithful subject against oppressors, who persecute him because, he believes, of his fidelity to the monarchy.⁶¹ Finally, he gave up, but very displeased, and reportedly saying somewhat waspishly that 'puisque le pape refusait le plus savant homme de son royaume, il lui donnerait le plus ignorant'; René de Breslay was substituted in place of Benoist.⁶²

Rome

Benoist's relations with Rome ostensibly remained friendly at the time of the Bible controversy (1566-c.1575). Despite the fact that Rome wished to suppress Benoist's Bible from 1575 onwards, it was made clear that the matter should be handled carefully, for Benoist was 'instruit, catholique et de bons desseins.'⁶³ This relationship appears to have changed by the end of the century, when Pope Clement VIII would not allow Benoist a bishopric. However, Henri IV was not greatly successful in getting his choice of bishops confirmed, as Bergin comments:

[...] Following the details of Henri IV's episcopal appointments before and even after 1595, and piecing together something like a coherent account of his actions, is extremely difficult, not least because the surviving evidence is itself patchy. Yet it is quite clear that he made far more actual nominations to bishoprics than the record of subsequent papal confirmations would indicate: some of his first nominees to vacant sees subsequently withdrew, some resigned to other parties in return for pensions, while others still were

⁶⁰ 27 April 1594. Letter to Troyes. Pasquier, pp. 273-74.

⁶¹ 'Ceux-là s'abusent qui font opiniâtrer ce refus, s'ils croient que je retirerai l'évêché des mains de mondit confesseur et qu'il sera abandonné de moi en la défense de la justice de sa cause. Otez-leur en l'espérance, et, si mondit confesseur doit quitter celle de ses bulles ainsi que vous m'avez écrit, il sera tellement consolé de ma protection contre quiconque voudra l'opprimer, que j'espère qu'il sera très bien maintenu, car je sais qu'il n'est persécuté que pour m'avoir affectionné et servi au besoin comme un fidèle sujet est tenu de faire.' Henri IV to Béthune, 4 June 1603. Pasquier, p. 298.

⁶² Bibliothèque d'Angers, MS 1779, dossier on the Benoist family. Pasquier, p. 301, n. 2.

⁶³ Gregory XIII confirmed the Faculty of Theology's censure in 1575, but 'parce qu'il était une personne instruite, catholique et de bons desseins, il fallait, pour ne pas le contrister, lui rendre compte de l'affaire avec les plus douces paroles possibles'. (Gregory XIII to Henri III.) See also the communication to the nuncio, Salviati: 'Con le piu soavi parole che potrà, mostrandogli che se ben l'opera è mala, non per questo Sua Santità tiene alcuna sinistra opinione de l'auttore. Anzi gli farà gratia et favore in ogni occasione che verrà.' Pasquier, pp. 104-05 (including p. 104, n. 3).

obliged to abandon their ambitions because they stood little or no chance of gaining effective possession of their designated see. A roll-call, admittedly partial, of those who failed to become bishops at this time, includes a son of the duc de Bouillon, Alexandre de La Marck, and the future Marshal de l'Hôpital (both nominated to Meaux), Ennemond Revol (Dol), Louis Séguier dean of Notre Dame of Paris (Laon), the future marquis de Coeuvres (Noyon), René Benoist, the so-called *pape des Halles* (Troyes), and the poet Philippe Desportes (Rouen). Brief as it is, this list seems more impressive than that of those who eventually became bishops [...]⁶⁴

Benoist's was therefore by no means an unusual case. Frederic Baumgartner confirms this, whilst highlighting Benoist's plight in particular, referring to his case as 'the most notable example' of 'the refusal of the papacy to confirm Henri's early appointments even after 1595'.⁶⁵

ii) Criticism of Benoist

If we now turn to examine the views of Benoist's detractors, we see that he had several opponents in both the Catholic and Protestant Churches. In this section, the assessments of the theologian's Protestant adversaries will be considered first, and then comments from those within his own Church will be explored.

Protestant attacks

Protestants had little sympathy for Benoist, but this is hardly surprising bearing in mind the numerous works composed by the theologian attacking their doctrine as heresy. Early in his career in Scotland, Benoist attracted insults of a general kind.⁶⁶ This was also true in France. Three of his treatises in particular prompted Protestant replies: a treatise concerning the Colloque de Poissy, his attack on Jean

⁶⁴ Bergin, pp. 374-75.

⁶⁵ Frederic J. Baumgartner, *Change and Continuity in the French Episcopate: The Bishops and the Wars of Religion 1547-1610* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1986), pp. 184-85.

⁶⁶ For Randolph's unsympathetic treatment, see Pasquier, pp. 77 and 82. For Fergusson's attacks, Pasquier, p. 79.

de L'Espine's work, and a pamphlet regarding the Cross of the Gastines.⁶⁷ The Protestants level several insults at Benoist, for instance that he is a drunk and has his '[cerveau] embrouillé du bon vin/ Que, chacun an, produit le vignoble angevin'.⁶⁸ For L'Espine, Benoist belongs with the pope, bishops, and all Catholics, who are 'bêtes et ânes d'Arcadie'.⁶⁹ L'Espine sarcastically comments

⁶⁷ *Brieve response a quelque remonstrance faicte a la roine mere du Roy, par ceux qui se disent persecutez pour la parolle de Dieu. 1561. [...] A Messieurs les reverendissimes prelatz de France, assemblez à Poëssy pour la religion* (Paris: Guillard et Warencore, 1561); *Brieve et facile refutation d'un livret divulgué au nom de J. de L'Espine, se disant ministre de la parole de Dieu: auquel violentant et detorquant l'Escripture sainte, il blaspheme malheureusement le saint sacrifice evangelique, dict vulgairement la Sainte Messe* (Paris: Chaudière, 1565); *Advertissement du moyen par lequel aisement tous troubles et differens, tant touchant la croix, de laquelle y a si grande altercation en ceste ville de Paris, que autres concernans la religion, seront assopis et ostez [...] A Messieurs les habitans de Paris* (Paris: Belot, 1571). Robert Kingdon explains the affair of the Cross of the Gastines:

During the third war of religion three prominent Parisian Protestant merchants had been hung and their property confiscated. Two of them were Philippe and Richard Gastine, who owned a large house used by the Parisian Protestant community for its religious services, including preachings, communion services, and other types of assembly. The court order condemning the Gastines also required that their house be dismantled and its components sold and the money be used to erect a stone cross with a tablet explaining what had happened, and that from then on the place would be a public park and never revert to private use. In accordance with this judgement the house had in fact been dismantled and a large pyramid of stone had been erected, topped with a crucifix with Latin verses inscribed in gold upon it.

The edict of pacification ending the third war of religion stipulated in its thirty-second clause that all condemnations of Protestants since 1559 were to be voided and that all monuments defaming them were to be demolished. The Gastine family and the Protestant community in Paris therefore petitioned for demolition of the Cross of the Gastines. They persuaded the admiral Coligny, as the most prominent Protestant in France, to present their petition to the royal court. This petition provoked a furor among the Catholics of Paris. A number of responsible Catholics reported that removal of this cross would provoke riots and spread disrespect for court orders; this cross had become a precious symbol to many lay Catholics of the government's commitment to their faith, and some saw in its destruction a blasphemous sacrilege, a knuckling under to pressure from heretic Protestants. The court finally decided on a compromise: the Gastine property would be cleared and returned to the family, in accordance with the edict of pacification, but the cross that had been erected there would be moved to a new site in the cemetery of the Innocents – the same cemetery where the miraculous hawthorn bloomed after Coligny's death. The admiral accepted this decision and the cross was in fact moved, late one foggy night in December 1571. But this compromise was extremely unpopular with the general population in Paris. In the riot following the moving of the cross, Gastine family furniture was destroyed and other damage was caused.

Robert M. Kingdon, *Myths about the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacres 1572-1576* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), pp. 39-40.

⁶⁸ Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Français 22560-64 (*Recueil de pièces de vers, chansons, sonnets, triolets sur les guerres de Religion formé par le chirurgien protestant Rasse des Noeux*). Pasquier, p. 67. Pasquier believes the sonnet to be a response to Benoist's treatise concerning Poissy.

⁶⁹ Jehan de L'Espine, *Defense et confirmation du traicté du vray sacrifice et sacrificateur, faict par M. Jehan de L'Espine ministre de la parolle de Dieu, a l'encontre des frivoles responses et argumens de M. René Benoist, Angevin, docteur en theologie* (Geneva: Bezart, 1567). See Pasquier, p. 60. For further details of the exchanges between Benoist and L'Espine, see Louis

that he may only aspire to the literary ‘heights’ of Artus Desiré: ‘[...] il [Benoist] soit mis au reng d’Artus Desiré, et du Curé de S. Paterne: Car il donne desja quelque esperance, que poursuyvant ses estudes de la sorte qu’il a faict jusques icy, avec le temps il les pourra approcher, et imiter aucunement leur style et methode.’⁷⁰

Benoist’s opposition to the removal of the Cross of the Gastines earned a written response⁷¹ and, according to Pasquier, the song entitled *Anagramme du surnom de N. M. Benoist* was penned around the time of the affair. This provides a good example of the general insults levelled at Benoist by Protestants:

Benoist pense bien qu’on l’estime, pense que chacun l’aime
 pense fort savant être, est un suffisant prêtre
 pense être bien diseur, n’est qu’un criard jaseur
 ne sait rien que médire, sait bien gaudir et rire
 toujours fait quelque livre, est presque toujours ivre
 fait bien de l’habile homme, se dit pilier de Rome
 est assuré menteur, est subtil ergoteur
 est mignon et bragard, est un très fin caffard
 sait bien ses audi nos, hait bien les huguenots,
 fait bien la chattemitte, est un bon Sodomite
 fait bien l’homme de bien, aboie comme un chien
 est plein de félonie, est tout comble d’envie
 dit ce qu’il ne sait pas, sait bien faire son cas
 est sans religion, est plein de fiction
 est un grand flagorneur, est un fin sermonneur
 veut avoir du renom, mais ne sait pas son nom, car qui son nom retournerait, BIEN SOT,
 tout au long trouverait.⁷²

Benoist’s pamphlets left Protestants with no doubts. He was fully opposed to Protestantism and wanted to see its destruction.

Hogu, *Jean de L’Espine, moraliste et théologien (1505?-1597): Sa vie, son oeuvre, ses idées* (Paris: Librairie Ancienne Honoré Champion, 1913), pp. 64-66.

⁷⁰ L’Espine, p. 4.

⁷¹ *Response de la plus saine partie de Messieurs de Paris à l’advertissement à eux envoyé par Maistre René Benoist docteur en theologie, sur le moyen d’appaiser les troubles advenus pour la croix et autres concernant la religion* (Paris: Des Champs, 1572). The authors dispute Benoist’s argument by using Holy Scripture. They thank Benoist for having put the Bible into French for their use.

Colleagues and peers

Protestants did not consider Benoist as having any Protestant sympathies and numerous Catholics supported the theologian as being orthodox and a ‘good’ Catholic. However, there were several incidents in Benoist’s career that provoked condemnation from Catholic colleagues and rendered him ‘suspect’ to Rome. The principal events causing suspicion were his Bible translation and subsequent actions in the 1560s and 1570s, his presence at St Denis in 1593 against the legate’s orders and subsequent defence of Henri IV, and an allegedly heretical sermon delivered to the court in Orléans in 1601, in which, according to L’Estoile,

[il] fist [...] un sermon, dans l’église Ste-Croix, auquel il donna à entendre que le vrai Purgatoire estoit le sang de Jésus-Christ; qu’il ne faloit attribuer mérite aux pèlerinages, mais se reposer entièrement sur la parfaite justice et obéissance du Fils de Dieu, qui par sa mort nous avoit délivrés de tous nos pecchés, et que c’estoit par lui seul que nous estions justifiés; qu’il ne faloit adorer la Croix, mais le Crucifié; mettre son espérance en Lui et non au Crucifix; que le Jubilé ne signifioit ni mérite, ni pardon, ni satisfaction, mais seulement une resjouissance. De quoi estant repris de quelques-uns en particulier, il soustint courageusement son dire, ‘bien marri (disoit-il) de n’en avoir dit davantage, et que les vicaires de Dieu faisoient beaucoup de choses dont ils seroient, possible, un jour désavoués de Lui’.⁷³

Under the League and the rule of the *Seize*, Benoist’s call for moderation and refusal to side with the League once its leaders had become anti-royalist found him enemies who questioned his orthodoxy.

If we return initially to Benoist’s translation of Scripture, we see earlier signs of discord between Benoist and his peers; his manoeuvrings in defence of his French Bible brought heavy criticism on the theologian from colleagues. By 1574, Benoist’s refusal to accept the Faculty of Theology’s ruling had earned him a reputation as a troublemaker from other Parisian theologians. The Faculty believed that ‘il a envie de mettre zizanie et trouble entre Monsieur l’Evêque de Paris et icelle Faculté, comme il a mis et fait plusieurs troubles en toute la

⁷² *Recueil de pièces de vers, chansons, sonnets, triolets sur les guerres de Religion formé par le chirurgien protestant Rasse des Noeux*. Pasquier, p. 153, n. 2.

Chrétienté, tant par le moyen de sesdites Bibles que Prédications'.⁷⁴ His obstinacy is also noted.⁷⁵ An anonymous work, now attributed to the syndic of the Faculty, criticised his Bible and attacked Benoist's impudence, audacity and irreligiousness.⁷⁶

Benoist's involvement in the affair of the Cross of the Gastines brought him problems with the authorities, but this time the municipal authorities. Charles IX had ordered its removal and so opposition was theoretically viewed as seditious. When questioned on this point, Benoist naturally denied that anything was amiss in his writing.⁷⁷ This is an unusual criticism of the theologian, who had predominantly cordial relations with the monarchy.

At a later date, Benoist found himself under fire because he refused to side with the League. These were potentially his most dangerous opponents in terms of personal safety. For instance, in February 1589, L'Estoile reports that Benoist was frequently woken at night to lead parishioners in the nocturnal processions favoured by the leaders of the League.⁷⁸ His reluctance was rewarded with heckles and being called *Politique* and *Hérétique*.⁷⁹ He and only two or three others condemned these processions, according to L'Estoile. Three years later, Guillaume Rose attacked those calling for peace, such as Benoist, as Judas figures and singled Benoist out as 'le Diable des Halles'.⁸⁰ One year after this, the tensions between Benoist and the League were evident: Benoist rebuked the Dukes of Fria and Mayenne in public, whilst they were taking part in a

⁷³ 19 April 1601. L'Estoile, VII, 289-90. This will be discussed later.

⁷⁴ *Collectio Judiciorum de novis erroribus*, ed. by Charles Duplessis d'Argentré, 3 vols (Paris: Cailleau, 1724-36; repr. Brussels: Culture et Civilisation, 1963), II (1728), 429.

⁷⁵ Duplessis d'Argentré, II, 432.

⁷⁶ *Observationes*. Pasquier, p. 91.

⁷⁷ *Journal d'un curé ligueur de Paris sous les trois derniers Valois*, ed. by Édouard de Barthélemy (Paris: Librairie académique, 1865), p. 134, cited in Pasquier, p. 152.

⁷⁸ L'Estoile, III, 247.

⁷⁹ This is of course an example of a breakdown in relations with 'le peuple'. It is rare, however, and no doubt caused by the fact that his parishioners would have been heavily influenced by the League's proponents.

⁸⁰ March 1592. L'Estoile, V, 162. Guillaume Rose, the Bishop of Senlis, was, of course, a *Ligueur*.

procession at St Eustache, ‘pource qu’ils babilloient et parloient trop haut.’⁸¹ According to M. de Bongars, Mayenne frequently plotted to kill Benoist.⁸²

Benoist’s independence worried members of the League. Jean Boucher declared that ‘le privilège ordinaire de Benoist est de changer de discours quand il veut et fût-ce en un même sermon sous ombre qu’il dit qu’il ne veut se faire enferrer et veut tomber comme les chats dessus ses pieds’,⁸³ whilst Yves Magistri regarded him as a *Politique*, a ‘dangerous fox’.⁸⁴ The occasional signs that Benoist had sympathies with the League disturbed the *Ligueurs* because of their apparent inconsistency. These signs included the sympathetic funeral oration given at St Eustache for the assassinated Guise brothers⁸⁵ and calling Henri IV ‘Relaps’ and other remarks categorised by the non-*Ligueur* L’Estoile as ‘sots propos’.⁸⁶

In Benoist’s support for Henri IV, his opponents saw confirmation of his status as a *Politique* or a heretic. In general, he does not appear to be viewed as a *Ligueur* by his contemporaries. Inconsistent behaviour such as the Guise funeral oration could easily be explained by the hazardous times in which Benoist lived and as an astute political manoeuvre with which to protect himself; he may also have disapproved of assassination. Pasquier reports that at the beginning of 1595, Benoist’s property was seized.⁸⁷ This was the repercussion of a long-running dispute with the Chapter of St Germain, who claimed part of St Eustache’s income. This battle had been waged since 1568, yet no such action had previously occurred. Benoist was evidently under significant pressure. Furthermore, Pasquier

⁸¹ June 1593. L’Estoile, VI, 30.

⁸² Letter from Bongars to Camerarius dated 31 July 1593: ‘On dit que Benoist est un homme d’une rare doctrine et j’ai vu depuis peu un fort homme de bien qui me disait [...] que le duc de Mayenne avait souvent fait inutilement des entreprises ou publiques ou secrètes contre sa vie.’ Bongars, *Lettres*, 2 vols (Paris: Pierre le Petit, 1668), II, 263, cited in Pasquier, pp. 226-27 (p. 226, n. 4).

⁸³ Jean Boucher, *Sermons de la simulée conversion* (Paris, 1594), p. 76. Pasquier, p. 217.

⁸⁴ [Magistri], cited in Pasquier, p. 217.

⁸⁵ Pasquier, p. 199. The sermon includes anti-royalist remarks and admiring sentiments of the *Commune* according to Pasquier, who is sceptical as to its authenticity.

⁸⁶ 26 April 1593. However, L’Estoile finds this strange, ‘pour ce qu’il n’avoit guères d’accoustumé d’en tenir que de bons’. L’Estoile, V, 236.

⁸⁷ Pasquier, pp. 139-40.

notes the deliberate suppression of documentation referring to the theologian. The registers of the parish of Breteil, another of Benoist's benefices, are complete except for the 1590 documents solely concerning Benoist's resignation and his successor's nomination. He comments,

Il est facile de se rendre compte que ces pages ont été déchirées intentionnellement. Pourquoi? Nous ne serions pas étonné qu'elles le furent, dans le but d'effacer le nom de notre auteur, par les membres du Chapitre de Saint-Malo, tous ardents ligueurs et évidemment hostiles à Benoist.⁸⁸

Benoist was not beloved of the League. On the whole, detractors amongst his Catholic peers held ultra-orthodox views.

Rome

Previous examination of Benoist's relationship with Rome detected a deterioration in relations, especially towards the end of the century. By the time Benoist required papal bulls to secure Troyes, his position seemed suspect in Rome, particularly his dealings with the king. The nuncio, Silingardi, damningly reported that Benoist was 'sospettissimo di heresie, di maniera che si può dire e concludere, che quanto hà questo Re, civè anima, corpo è robba, tutto sia nelle mani d'heretice'.⁸⁹ Benoist's Orléans sermon added fuel to the flames. A contemporary claimed that the theologian had held 'mauvaises opinions' for a long time.⁹⁰ He notes with satisfaction that Benoist has been denounced in Rome for the sermon: 'Voilà comme les mauvais ecclésiastiques et qui ont de particulières et erronées opinions se trouvent tôt ou tard châtiés de leurs folies'.⁹¹ Another nuncio, Ubaldini, confirms the position taken against the theologian by Rome, branding him an 'uomo pernicioso, inimicissimo di Roma, e dell'autorità

⁸⁸ Pasquier, p. 130, n. 3.

⁸⁹ Silingardi in a letter to Cardinal Pietro Aldobrandini, 22 July 1599. Archives Vaticanes, *Nunziatura di Francia*, vol. 47, fol. 38, cited in Pasquier, p. 244, n. 2.

⁹⁰ Philippe Hurault de Cheverny, *Mémoires* (Collection Petitot). These 'ideas' included some concerning papal authority. Pasquier, p. 252.

⁹¹ Hurault, cited in Pasquier, p. 254.

del Papa'.⁹² Finally, the pope himself was suspicious of Benoist's beliefs. Clement VIII reportedly said that he could be sympathetic to those who had converted from heresy, but not to those Catholics who wrote like heretics and instead of removing the bad opinions held of them, said things from the pulpit that confirmed them.⁹³

Conclusion

The body of opinion from Benoist's contemporaries divides sharply into two. Those who supported the theologian did so vociferously and sometimes endangered their own safety; his constancy in several respects was matched by that of these people. Pierre de Gondi's support, for instance, lasted throughout Benoist's long career in Paris. The seemingly hyperbolic praise by Cayet and Gérard after Benoist's death was by no means without justification; indeed, similar sentiment was expressed during his lifetime. This is perhaps because in hazardous times, extreme positions and measures have to be taken; energetically voiced support was possibly one strategy employed to protect Benoist.

On the other hand, Benoist attracted strong criticism. There is more evolution seen in this body of thought, developing as it does with the times and in response to Benoist's actions. Compliments are often along familiar lines, extolling the various virtues and qualities of the theologian, whilst disapproving remarks show a wider degree of variation. Censure appears more 'reactive', as opposed to praise, which is sometimes – although not always – 'proactive', providing defence before the opportunity for attack. The above analysis seems most appropriate for the negative comments from Catholics; their disapproval often came as a response to a specific event. One suspects that several Catholic adversaries were, however, unhappy about more than any single event; their

⁹² Pasquier, p. 265, n. 4. Pasquier attributes the feelings of Ubaldini to his anti-Gallican stance.

⁹³ Letter from Béthune to Henri IV, 18 June 1603. Pasquier, p. 299, n. 3.

distrust was long-term and they used all possible occasions as pretexts to criticise Benoist and to elaborate upon their previous critical remarks. The attacks from Protestants were a more constant stream of invective and did not change substantially in nature. Criticism came to Benoist because of his loyalties to the monarchy and because of certain of his religious opinions and stances; no credible attacks ever damaged his reputation as a hardworking pastor.

2

‘Post-Pasquier’ thought

When one encounters references to Benoist in books published since 1913, a surprisingly rare occurrence for one so important in his time, it becomes evident that researchers depend predominantly on Pasquier’s account. He is frequently quoted as the first point of reference. Almost without exception, only a few pages in any study of the period are devoted to Benoist. The divergence of opinion on Benoist is therefore unexpected. The lack of space dedicated to Benoist, a man with a long and active career, often means that commentators’ responses are generated after concentrating on isolated events in his career and an attempt is made to categorise Benoist and to use his actions in order to illustrate the general theory being expounded. Little consideration is given to the remainder of Benoist’s life. Related to this, the interest for some lies in focusing on Benoist and explaining him in the light of the incidents in his career that were unusual and unorthodox. However, on the whole, historians are more interested in the heterodox Protestants, whilst literary experts have no desire to investigate Benoist’s unsophisticated writings. The few responses that do exist are diverse in their interpretation, because historians have not yet deemed it worth negotiating a common position on the subject of Benoist.

a) Modern evaluations: Benoist (mis)understood

Louis Hogu asserts that Benoist was ‘un curé ligueur’.⁹⁴ He does not explain how he has formed this judgement, or what he means by this term.⁹⁵ Although Denis Pallier’s first reference quotes the theologian as a *Politique*,⁹⁶ Pallier refers to him as a *Ligueur*.⁹⁷ Benoist was amongst those who developed ‘le moralisme ligueur’ and was ‘l’artisan d’une rationalisation moralisante de l’émotion ligueuse’.⁹⁸ Several of Benoist’s works are listed in Pallier’s bibliography of Parisian *Ligueur* publications and Pallier’s conclusions would seem to spring from those works, which form a very small proportion of the theologian’s oeuvre.⁹⁹ If Benoist was a *Ligueur*, few of his contemporaries had noticed the fact.

After noting Benoist’s numerous defences of the Catholic faith and attacks on Protestantism, Barbara Diefendorf’s interest in Benoist centres in particular on his involvement in the affair of the Cross of the Gastines.¹⁰⁰ Diefendorf suggests that he ‘helped incite his audience to sedition’; his pamphlet ‘conveys a message that is ambiguous if not downright seditious’; indeed

if Benoist employs ambiguous language [...] it is because he had learned from previous reprimands just how far he dared to go in stirring up popular emotions. He could get away with much more direct incitements to violence when France was at war with the Huguenots – and when his attack on the heretics did not imply a criticism of the crown.¹⁰¹

⁹⁴ Louis Hogu, *Extrait de la revue de l’Anjou sur l’építaphe de René Benoist* (Angers: G. Grassin, 1913), p. 5.

⁹⁵ Here lies another problem: what do different critics mean by *Ligueur*, *Politique* and ‘orthodox’? Orthodox to which type of Catholicism?

⁹⁶ Denis Pallier, *Recherches sur l’imprimerie à Paris pendant la Ligue (1585-1594)* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, [c.1975]), p. 82. Arlette Jouanna echoes Pallier’s words (her source is Pallier, p. 82) and in turn writes of Benoist as a “‘politique” notoire”; see Arlette Jouanna and others, *Histoire et dictionnaire des guerres de Religion* ([n.p.]: Éditions Robert Laffont, 1998), p. 367.

⁹⁷ Pallier, p. 134.

⁹⁸ Pallier, p. 173.

⁹⁹ Pallier does not give a clear definition of the term *Ligueur*. His explanation of the groups of works included in his bibliography of *Ligueur* publications demonstrates an all-embracing approach, not confined to texts favourable to the League or their officially sponsored works. Pallier, p. 216.

¹⁰⁰ Barbara B. Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross: Catholics and Huguenots in Sixteenth-Century Paris* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 149-52.

¹⁰¹ Diefendorf, p. 151.

This was, in fact, one pamphlet out of many. Usually, Benoist displayed his loyalty to the crown and appealed for the quelling of seditious elements. During the League, he preached moderation and calm, and stayed faithful to the monarchy. Bearing this in mind, Diefendorf's last statement seems baffling. Larissa Taylor, clearly influenced by this work, which she believes is 'an excellent discussion of [Benoist's] life and sermons',¹⁰² suggests that

in the 1560s and 1570s, Benoist sometimes spoke in apocalyptic terms, as when he warned in 1571 that the removal of the cross of Gastines would result in divine vengeance and damnation [...] Benoist's preaching after the beginning of the Religious Wars resonates with calls to violence.¹⁰³

Taylor's comments can be traced back directly to Diefendorf's findings.

Robert Kingdon's interest similarly concentrates on this particular work, a 'flamboyant denunciation of the removal of the cross'.¹⁰⁴ At least partially following the argumentation of a contemporary, Kingdon suggests that 'Benoist's inflammatory published attack on the moving of the cross of the Gastines was a direct attempt to undermine **for religious reasons** a considered order of the king.'¹⁰⁵ Kingdon here provides a credible reason for Benoist's pamphlet: religious convictions, which even his loyalty to the king would not temper.

By concentrating on one aspect of his career, or on a small fraction of his work, Benoist could be viewed as an extremist, a seditious *Ligueur*. In context, this was one pamphlet amongst many. In fact, the following year, Charles IX appointed the 'seditious' Benoist as his *lecteur royal*. At the time of publication, Benoist was under pressure due to his French Bible and was concerned to ensure his Catholic credentials remained firmly in place. As for Pallier's conclusions, we have already seen how far Benoist was from being a *Ligueur* during the rule of Henri III and Henri IV, the two reigns which Pallier's work bridges.

¹⁰² Larissa Juliet Taylor, *Heresy and Orthodoxy in Sixteenth-Century Paris: François Le Picart and the Beginnings of the Catholic Reformation* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), p. 1, n. 1.

¹⁰³ Taylor, *Heresy and Orthodoxy*, p. 210.

¹⁰⁴ Kingdon, p. 40.

Benoist's 'out-of-character' actions have intrigued historians, who have sought to furnish explanations. Amédée Boinet cites insanity. His work on Parisian churches picks out Benoist as meriting special mention. Mentioning the funeral oration of the Guises, he states that after showing support for the League, the theologian abandoned the party and opposed it. Referring back to the work of Leroux de Lincy, he suggests that perhaps Benoist's odd behaviour was the origin of the proverb "Personne ne peut être curé de Saint-Eustache s'il n'est fou".¹⁰⁶ Boinet does not consider the expediency of Benoist's actions set against the turmoil of civil war.

Commentators rarely endorse Boinet's implication that Benoist was mad or erratic, although they have projected various personality traits onto the theologian. Pasquier, whose work in this area necessitated the reading of much of Benoist's work and the documentation surrounding his life, paints the picture of a moderate person.¹⁰⁷ His sympathetic depiction is that of a compassionate man,¹⁰⁸ but of one who is unafraid to broach anything, especially correctable errors.¹⁰⁹ He is a little cold, certainly tenacious, independent and unwilling to prostitute his values.¹¹⁰ He is shrewd, keeping his independence to safeguard his person and success at work.¹¹¹ However, when Benoist's behaviour moves away from the strictly orthodox line, Pasquier is not so sympathetic. Pasquier, a Catholic priest, reveals his own origins clearly: Benoist's behaviour at the time of the Bible controversy shows stubbornness,¹¹² lack of humility and a persecution complex;¹¹³ he deserved to be condemned because there were heretical errors in

¹⁰⁵ Kingdon, p. 117. My highlighting.

¹⁰⁶ Boinet, I, 468. Pasquier has alternative explanations for this proverb; one involves Benoist walking about 'la tête dans un tabourin'. Pasquier, p. 185, n. 1.

¹⁰⁷ Pasquier, p. 83.

¹⁰⁸ Pasquier, p. 64.

¹⁰⁹ Pasquier, p. 62.

¹¹⁰ Pasquier, p. 26.

¹¹¹ Pasquier, p. 196.

¹¹² Pasquier, pp. 168, 303.

¹¹³ Pasquier, p. 259.

the work;¹¹⁴ the way he went about the work lacked patience, wisdom and prudence;¹¹⁵ he was hardly ‘un parfait exemple d’obéissance et de soumission’ to his parishioners.¹¹⁶ Furthermore, Benoist showed weakness in his acceptance of the proposed reforms for the Faculty (‘il ne protesta pas, il laissa faire’).¹¹⁷ Pasquier does not consider that the motivation for these actions could be the advancement of a pre-formed plan or sincerely held religious convictions. For Pasquier and Boinet, these apparent oddities and discrepancies were unplanned irrationalities, due to temperament and character flaws, not the logical progression of a programme.

On a related note, some have found the key to Benoist’s ‘blunders’ in his ignorance. G. Wylie Sypher dismisses Benoist as deficient intellectually and in Catholic constancy. His proof of this is partly that ‘despite his ignorance of both Greek and Hebrew, he had undertaken to translate the Bible into French.’¹¹⁸ H.-M. Féret is not quite so dismissive, commenting on Benoist’s understanding of the laity and its needs, although it is made clear that this is due to his plebeian background. Only through hard work did Benoist achieve success; he was ‘vigilant et pratique plus qu’homme de science’.¹¹⁹

These particular criticisms ignore the fact that Benoist’s method of translation was in the great tradition of Bible translation, whereby one takes the best translation available and revises it. Moreover, he claimed to be translating from the Latin Vulgate, not Greek and Hebrew sources. Finally, as will be discussed later, simply because one challenges the position of one’s Church over matters such as vernacular Bible translation, it does not necessarily follow that one is ‘inconstant’. Féret’s comments about Benoist’s learning appear to contradict the

¹¹⁴ Pasquier, p. 116.

¹¹⁵ Pasquier, p. 116.

¹¹⁶ Pasquier, p. 132.

¹¹⁷ Pasquier, p. 264.

¹¹⁸ Sypher, “‘Faisant ce qu’il leur vient à plaisir’”, 63, n. 16.

¹¹⁹ *Catholicisme: Hier, aujourd’hui, demain*, ed. by G. Jacquemet and others, 15 vols (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1948-), I (1948), col. 1427. Entry by H.-M. Féret.

body of thought espoused by Benoist's contemporaries. Again, Benoist's activities are seen as the result of blunders.

b) Re-evaluation: towards an understanding of Benoist

A large proportion of commentators have been reluctant to slot Benoist into the above groupings or to use labels such as *Politique*. Some have tentatively noted directions he appeared to be taking or contented themselves by noting what he was not. Taking this a step further, some have constructed new categories and theories in which to fit Benoist; they have resisted the temptation to situate him within pre-existing theories. This development can lead us to understand Benoist as somebody with a coherent set of beliefs – not in spite of his ‘eccentric’ acts, but because of them – from which stem a specific agenda and well-formulated programme.

i) Benoist the Nicodemite?

Wanegffelen, inspired by Lucien Febvre's work, takes the following position as his starting point:

Deux religions, la catholique et la réformée? Des religions plutôt, car il y en eut bien plus que deux, et la fécondité d'un siècle élémentaire ne s'est point limitée à dresser face à face un protestantisme bien coordonné et un catholicisme bien expurgé.¹²⁰

His 561-page published thesis seeks to reconsider and redefine those he deems to be ‘ni Rome ni Genève’. He generates a terminology for those who may be ‘catholiques d’entre-deux’: ‘catholiques augustinien’, ‘ni Luthériens, ni Papistes: les nicodémites, des catholiques méconnus’, ‘temporiseurs’, ‘moyenneurs’,

¹²⁰ Lucien Febvre, quoted by Thierry Wanegffelen in his *Une difficile fidélité: Catholiques malgré le Concile en France, XVI^e-XVII^e siècles* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1999), p. VII.

‘iréniques’, and ‘modérés’.¹²¹ Rather than assessing Benoist’s actions in terms of irrationality or ignorance, Wanegffelen builds the case for Benoist as a Nicodemite, after redefining the term. Many of Benoist’s ‘foibles’ are explained by this. In a more recent work, Wanegffelen argues that fidelity – and thus orthodoxy – came to mean unconditional submission as a result of the Reformation, forcing, as one would suppose, those wishing to stay in the Catholic Church to submit to and assume extremist positions.¹²² However, he catches glimpses of those who found this polarisation undesirable and unnatural. Benoist appears to emerge as one of those to whom Wanegffelen dedicates his work: ‘ceux qui, chacun à sa manière, se voulant d’Église, osent malgré tout une fidélité paradoxale, critique et pleinement adulte.’¹²³

Wanegffelen puts aside Calvin’s definition of Nicodemites.¹²⁴ Alain Tallon underlines the central premise:

[Wanegffelen] refuse bien entendu la polémique calvinienne, qui fait des nicodémites de simples lâches: reconnaissant *in petto* la vérité de l’Évangile, ils continuent de participer aux cérémonies papistes par crainte de la persécution ou de l’exil. Or, si une telle attitude a bien existé, [Wanegffelen] préfère lui réserver le terme de “temporisateur” et lui donner un contenu moins négatif: le temporisateur est celui qui prend en compte le temps où il vit et ses contraintes. Ceux que Calvin accuse de nicodémisme ne relèvent pas tous de cette catégorie-là, loin de là. L’A[uteur] va plus loin encore que la thèse de Carlo Ginzburg, qui voit dans le nicodémisme une religion du privé. **Pour [Wanegffelen], la croyance en la justification par la seule grâce de Dieu, que ces “nicodémites” partagent avec les réformateurs, est compatible chez eux avec une fervente piété eucharistique, qui n’a rien de simulé. Elle est toute portée à l’adoration du Christ en croix au moment de l’élévation, à la méditation sur le “non sum dignus” (p. 95).** L’analyse de [Wanegffelen] est sur ce point remarquable de finesse et permet de bien mieux comprendre les sentiments religieux d’un Mazurier, d’un Roussel ou d’une Marguerite de Navarre.¹²⁵

Wanegffelen’s study, as he himself comments, concentrates on those rejected by both the Catholic and Protestant Reformations. The historian argues that to comprehend such personalities, we must abandon a ‘confessional’ approach or

¹²¹ Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome ni Genève*.

¹²² Wanegffelen, *Une difficile fidélité*.

¹²³ Wanegffelen, *Une difficile fidélité*, p. V.

¹²⁴ Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome ni Genève*, pp. 35-36.

¹²⁵ Alain Tallon’s review of *Ni Rome ni Genève*, in *Revue d’histoire ecclésiastique*, 93 (1998), 124-27 (pp. 124-25). My highlighting.

these Nicodemites will be misunderstood; indeed, incomprehension has often met those who fall into this category.¹²⁶

Wanegffelen bases much of his theory as regards Benoist on ideas he notes in a pamphlet of Benoist's published as early as 1561, which contains 'une exposition proprement nicodémite [...] des "fruits du saint Sacrement de l'Autel"':¹²⁷ the merit gained by the death and passion of Christ is stressed. According to Benoist, Satan deprives of this merit those he turns away from faith in the real and corporeal presence. This is because Satan's victims have in consequence also turned away from 'la sainte Messe, laquelle est célébrée en recordation et action de graces de la mort et passion de Jesus Christ selon l'institution et commandement d'iceluy comme clerement atteste l'Escriture sainte'.¹²⁸ Benoist cautions against attempts to understand all aspects involved (this is impossible, we should rely on faith alone). Wanegffelen thus concludes from Benoist's work that it is because they reject the Mass 'présentée comme le mémorial de la croix du Christ qui seule sauve', that Calvinist sacramentarians cannot participate in Christ's merits.¹²⁹ Wanegffelen notes similar leanings in a 1586 text, where Benoist, defending 'Christian' Catholics against the label of idolaters, justifies the cult of the sacrament through the cross and passion of Christ, and not the real presence.¹³⁰ Again, in a 1574 catechism published on the request of Pierre de Gondi, Wanegffelen detects 'une sensibilité religieuse d'entre-deux'.¹³¹ The historian also claims that Benoist prefers to explain Catholic ideas and is not

¹²⁶ Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome ni Genève*, p. 36.

¹²⁷ Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome ni Genève*, p. 191. The treatise in question is Benoist's *Claire probation de la necessaire manducation de la substantielle et reale humanité de Jesus Christ, vray Dieu et vray homme, au S. Sacrement de l'autel* (PQ2).

¹²⁸ Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome ni Genève*, pp. 191-92.

¹²⁹ Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome ni Genève*, p. 192. Of the same work Wanegffelen comments, 'Benoît concilie, dans un sens tout à fait nicodémite, piété eucharistique et insistance sur le salut procuré par la croix du Christ. L'expression de "sacrifice de la messe" n'y est, ainsi, jamais employée. Il est difficile de savoir si René Benoît est lui-même nicodémite ou s'il n'a recours aux options nicodémites que par souci pastoral.' Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome ni Genève*, p. 419.

¹³⁰ PQ9; Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome ni Genève*, p. 192. Wanegffelen is in addition struck by Benoist's efforts elsewhere to prove that belief in purgatory, the cult of saints, confession and indulgences is not incompatible 'avec la foi dans l'absolue gratuité du salut', p. 421.

¹³¹ PQ44; Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome ni Genève*, p. 422.

sidetracked into stressing certain points merely because they have been attacked by Protestants.¹³²

Wanegffelen reassesses the Orléans sermon in the light of the above, observing that the words of L'Estoile's description of the sermon could in fact correspond to the above ideas and are in keeping with the spirit of Benoist's previous treatises.¹³³ But these beliefs are untenable – in public at least – at this point in time, despite the theologian's evident constancy to the Catholic Church and reproof of heresy:

Comme pour Gérard Roussel, les rédacteurs de *l'Interim* d'Augsbourg ou Jean de Monluc, il ne s'agit pas pour René Benoît de chercher un compromis, un terrain d'entente possible avec les protestants, mais avant tout d'exprimer ce qu'il croit. Mais, dans le contexte de la confrontation avec la réformation protestante, cela ne peut plus être accepté.¹³⁴

Wanegffelen's argument is persuasive: it explains some of Benoist's 'odd' behaviour. The discrepancies in his behaviour confirm to Wanegffelen a Nicodemite status:

Le scandale de 1601 donnerait donc à penser que René Benoît était bien nicodémite. Jusque-là, il était possible d'interpréter sa position comme le choix délibéré, à l'intention des protestants et des fidèles incertains, d'une prédication propice à leur rappeler les vérités catholiques sans les heurter par des affirmations sur la grâce que lui-même condamnait au moins comme des excès de langage, sinon comme des outrances doctrinales. Mais en 1601, prêchant devant une Cour gagnée au[x] options tridentines, quel aurait été son intérêt pastoral ou personnel? Vraiment, la théologie d'entre-deux développée dans toute l'oeuvre de René Benoît paraît renvoyer à la propre sensibilité religieuse du curé parisien, et celle-ci est sans conteste nicodémite.¹³⁵

The implications of Wanegffelen's theory are significant. He maintains that Benoist's particular beliefs were those necessary to reconcile Henri IV's religious convictions to those of the Catholic Church.¹³⁶ For Wanegffelen, Henri IV did not renounce his beliefs, it was not 'une abjuration pure et simple du passé religieux

¹³² Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome ni Genève*, p. 422.

¹³³ Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome ni Genève*, p. 423.

¹³⁴ Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome ni Genève*, p. 423.

¹³⁵ Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome ni Genève*, pp. 423-24.

¹³⁶ Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome ni Genève*, p. 424. Bergin agrees that Benoist was 'closely involved in the events leading to Henri's conversion'. Bergin, p. 376.

du Roi’;¹³⁷ like Benoist, Henri IV was ‘entre Genève et Rome’. Benoist’s spiritual role with the king was thus pivotal.¹³⁸ The historian points to the many signs of goodwill shown to the theologian by Henri IV, even after the furore at Orléans;¹³⁹ this surely demonstrates Henri IV’s affection and esteem for him.

Two final observations derived from Wanegffelen’s research: firstly, he judges that although Benoist was a man of moderation,¹⁴⁰ he never warped any point of dogma to render it acceptable¹⁴¹ and he insisted on the reform of the clergy;¹⁴² secondly, Wanegffelen’s definition of Nicodemites (‘ni Luthériens, ni Papistes: les nicodémites’) is generated from an earlier period: c.1520-c.1550. Those he includes for consideration in this section include Martial Mazurier and the Meaux group. The period to which the definition relates is significantly earlier, at a time when one did not have to choose, when it was unclear what would happen.

Before reaching a final conclusion as to what can be learned from Wanegffelen’s work, let us be clear that we cannot embrace this research entirely without reservations. The historian’s definition of nicodemism and those considered for this category certainly leave room for ambiguity. Wanegffelen chooses to explore what is by its very nature ambiguous and sometimes indeterminate; some of the people who populate his work gain entry due to behaviour which has puzzled generations of historians. Wanegffelen’s category of nicodemism offers benefits, as Mack Holt recognises:

For the author, nicodemism allows a greater sensibility for the ambiguous boundaries of the frontier separating Catholicism and Calvinism, without essentializing either as a benchmark. Moreover, this term allows for the continuing movement within this vast frontier without crystalizing into a hardened and static dialectic of interior versus exterior

¹³⁷ Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome ni Genève*, p. 425.

¹³⁸ Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome ni Genève*, pp. 425, 424.

¹³⁹ Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome ni Genève*, p. 424.

¹⁴⁰ Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome ni Genève*, p. 425.

¹⁴¹ Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome ni Genève*, pp. 455-56. This is the basis of his refutation of Benoist as author of the *Examen Pacifique*.

¹⁴² Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome ni Genève*, pp. 419-20. Wanegffelen notes Benoist’s insistence that the existence of clerical abuses was not a reason for leaving the Catholic Church. Benoist’s work does indeed contain many attacks on clerical abuses; this theme runs through his work throughout his lifetime.

religion, a dichotomy that did not exist for many such nicodemites as Wanegffelen makes clear.¹⁴³

The ‘freedom’ of nicodemism is advantageous in that it creates a ‘space’ in which many disparate personalities with widely diverging agendas may be accommodated, but it should be pointed out that Wanegffelen’s evidence for nicodemism can at times seem lacking in absolute clarity and conclusiveness, as we have seen with Benoist to a certain point. That said, Wanegffelen’s work is without question effective in challenging past theories of blanket polarisation in which there was no room for a more nuanced positioning.

Although it should be remembered that Wanegffelen’s survey does not solely concentrate on Benoist – he is one amongst many – I find Wanegffelen’s work for the most part convincing and illuminating where Benoist is concerned. Wanegffelen’s approach is instrumental in leading us to an explanation for much of Benoist’s behaviour and to viewing it from a new angle and perspective. I believe that many modern historians and other researchers who have encountered Benoist have been working towards something like the position set out by Wanegffelen, which should perhaps be revised and elaborated upon further. Benoist’s position is not ambiguous and he is neither wavering nor unsure as to what he believes; the theologian was committed to the Catholic Church (and so ‘orthodox’ in this respect), whilst holding sincere beliefs that did not correspond to the dogmatic position established for Catholics in the latter half of the sixteenth century in reaction to Protestantism. His beliefs follow those earlier currents of the century, those influenced by humanistic, Erasmian, and evangelical thought. Ambitions for the reform and renewal of the Catholic Church which involved, for example, the reform of the clergy, are entirely compatible with this theory. Such projects were not intended to destroy the Church, but rather to reinvigorate it, to strengthen its foundations and to increase its appeal to the laity, who were in some cases alienated and held at a distance. Disenchantment amongst the masses

¹⁴³ Mack P. Holt, review of *Ni Rome ni Genève*, in *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 29 (1998), 575-77 (p. 576).

was dangerous to the Catholic Church. The plan was ultimately to remove heresy and, of course, the abuses within the Catholic Church which made it an easy target for criticism. If Benoist opposed Rome and its proponents (such as the Faculty of Theology), it was not with the destructive aim of the heretic, but rather as a questioning Catholic who did not accept dogma solely on the grounds that it emanated from the pope, and who wanted to rebuild and improve the Catholic Church. Unfortunately for Benoist, debate at this period was dangerous: opposition saw the opponent branded a Lutheran or Calvinist.

ii) Further re-evaluation: more well-considered views

If historians and other researchers revisited their work on Benoist, many would find their evaluations of Benoist to be compatible with that of Wanegffelen, often with little modification. Linguist Susan Baddeley considers Benoist ‘progressiste’.¹⁴⁴ John Durkan, historian of Scotland, noting Benoist’s involvement in editing a work of Marsilio Ficino, labels him Platonist, in addition to recognising his contribution to Catholicism, characterising him as ‘a sharpshooter, an untidy but not unlearned pamphleteer’ who ‘helped to confirm the queen’s [Mary’s] stand on disputed doctrines’.¹⁴⁵ Indeed, Durkan believes Benoist to have been so troublesome to the Protestants that he was ‘encouraged’ to return to France.

Further back in time, Pasquier unhappily records the labels given to Benoist by Agrippa d’Aubigné (‘demi-huguenot’),¹⁴⁶ Gabriel Naudé (‘ni catholique trop zélé,

¹⁴⁴ Susan Baddeley, *L’Orthographe française au temps de la Réforme* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1993), p. 297.

¹⁴⁵ John Durkan, ‘The Library of Mary, Queen of Scots’, in *Mary Stewart: Queen in Three Kingdoms*, ed. by Michael Lynch (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988), pp. 71-104 (p. 87). Considering Benoist’s range of work and its influence, Durkan’s dismissal of Benoist as being ‘no heavy artillery’ should perhaps be reassessed.

¹⁴⁶ Agrippa d’Aubigné, *Confession catholique du Sieur de Sancy*, in *Oeuvres*, ed. by Henri Weber, Jacques Bailbé and Marguerite Soulié ([Paris]: Éditions Gallimard, 1969), p. 582; Pasquier, p. 214. The annotator of this collection of D’Aubigné’s works draws our attention to D’Aubigné’s *Histoire universelle*, in which it is claimed that Benoist was part of a group headed by Sancy that

ni huguenot obstiné')¹⁴⁷ and J. Leclerc ('adoucisseur')¹⁴⁸ as a legacy of the erroneous attribution of the *Examen Pacifique* to Benoist. These terms, repeated reluctantly by Pasquier, are perhaps the best one could generate to describe Benoist's position in an era in which it seemed unthinkable to allow the blurring of boundaries and limits and in which no vocabulary existed that would satisfactorily describe those who did not sit comfortably behind the lines drawn out by the church authorities. With hindsight, these men would perhaps agree that Benoist was a Nicodemite.

If Benoist did indeed have a programme of reform in mind for the Catholic Church, the Cardinal of Lorraine possibly sensed this, as Tallon's research would confirm. He asserts that Benoist's return from Scotland was due to the cardinal's special request that he should accompany him to the Council of Trent. Arriving too late, he had to settle for pamphleteering against the Protestants, Tallon observes.¹⁴⁹

Benoist, however, did not simply settle for pamphleteering alone and a reactive role. He actively carved out a programme of renewal, of which his Bible translation would seem a logical part. M. H. Black assesses Benoist's attitude to the Faculty as 'stiff-necked',¹⁵⁰ but if Benoist were determined to carry out a programme, persistence would be necessary.

Later, at the time of the League, if we accept this theory, Benoist's beliefs would be increasingly hazardous to maintain. If he did not want to renounce his views or become a hypocrite, silence would be the shrewd option. Indeed, in 1591-92, he

attempted to bring about a reconciliation between the Catholic and Protestant Churches in 1589 before the death of Henri III (p. 1286, n. 3); see Agrippa d'Aubigné, *Histoire universelle du Sieur d'Aubigné*, 2nd edn, 3 vols (Amsterdam: pour les heritiers de H. Commelin, 1626), III, cols 501-02.

¹⁴⁷ Gabriel Naudé, *Considérations politiques sur les coups d'État, par G. N. P.* (Rome, 1639), p. 122.

¹⁴⁸ J. Leclerc, *Bibliothèque universelle* (Amsterdam, 1689), XI, 547.

¹⁴⁹ Tallon, *La France et le Concile de Trente*, p. 568.

¹⁵⁰ Black, p. 448.

only published one work, a work which Pasquier regards as devoid of all personality.¹⁵¹ The best compromise would be neutrality. Michel Pernot describes Benoist as a 'neutral' (as opposed to being a *Politique* or *Ligueur*) and notes his distrust of the League, whereas the Faculty of Theology and most convents and monasteries welcomed their ideas.¹⁵² Visibly, Benoist might appear to be 'wavering' when compared to the 'League *acharnés*', as described by Mark Greengrass.¹⁵³

Pasquier attests to Benoist's Gallicanism, patriotism and royalism.¹⁵⁴ This should perhaps aid us in modifying Wanegffelen's religious interpretation of events and add a political dimension to Benoist's outlook. At this period, the two were interlinked; it is reasonable to suggest that Benoist's politics and religion went hand-in-hand and complemented each other and that perhaps Benoist was more politically orientated than Wanegffelen suggests. Michael Wolfe's comprehensive rewriting of the abjuration of Henri IV might be used to modify the position of Wanegffelen, reaffirming the political aspect and importance of Benoist, who he asserts was most definitely a loyalist Catholic (and not a *Ligueur*).¹⁵⁵ His interpretation of events concentrates less on religious convictions, looking at political and cultural influences, whereas Wanegffelen seeks to place events in a purely religious context. Wolfe comments that Benoist was 'not directly affiliated with the loyalist coalition' but 'had sufficiently demonstrated [his] hostility to the League'.¹⁵⁶ According to Wolfe, Henri IV's invitation to those such as Benoist and more overt loyalists was a political move to accentuate divisions and avoid a *Tiers-Parti*. Black, too, sees it as a 'stroke of political fortune [for Benoist that

¹⁵¹ Pasquier, p. 217.

¹⁵² Michel Pernot, *Les Guerres de Religion en France 1559-1598* (Paris: Sedes, 1987), p. 177, n. 16, p. 291, n. 48.

¹⁵³ Mark Greengrass, 'The Public Context of the Abjuration of Henri IV', in *From Valois to Bourbon: Dynasty, State and Society in Early Modern France*, ed. by Keith Cameron (Exeter: University of Exeter, 1989), pp. 107-26 (p. 108).

¹⁵⁴ Pasquier, pp. 265-66, 208, 197.

¹⁵⁵ Michael Wolfe, *The Conversion of Henri IV: Politics, Power, and Religious Belief in Early Modern France* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), p. 35.

¹⁵⁶ Wolfe, p. 135.

he] came back into prominence with the new reign'.¹⁵⁷ Black appears to be dismissing political aptitude on Benoist's part, but he may have had a combined political and religious agenda, not to mention a keen understanding of the workings of politics.¹⁵⁸ Black then almost proceeds to acknowledge this, commenting that the whole Bible affair appears to be 'a copybook example of the mechanics and politics of privilege and authorization'.¹⁵⁹ Wolfe, although not centrally concerned with Benoist, contrives to sum up the situation admirably: 'In the end, Benoist's case for Catholic acceptance of Henri IV rested on this precarious, yet optimistic, vision of future religious reform and renewal under the converted king.'¹⁶⁰

In this context, even though Benoist might be a 'good' Catholic in his belief in the Catholic Church, the means to achieving his Gallican and royalist ends and pre-Reformation agenda went against Rome (for instance, ignoring the legate by going to St Denis) and Rome's conception of orthodoxy. Benoist's standpoint, both politically and religiously, was not centred around that of Rome. He was Gallican and his political allegiance was to France. Unsurprising, then, that his learning should be viewed as 'wayward' by Clement VIII and his translation used as 'sufficient evidence of [his] doubtful orthodoxy for him to be unacceptable as a bishop'.¹⁶¹ It seems likely that Benoist, influenced by evangelical and Gallican thought, did not merely stand by passively when acting as Dean of the Faculty of Theology, but actively approved of the reforms which took the Faculty away

¹⁵⁷ Black, p. 448.

¹⁵⁸ Pasquier suggests that the king specifically nominated Benoist for Troyes, heavily influenced by the League, because of Benoist's skilful tactics (Pasquier, p. 271). Despite having been excluded from the Faculty of Theology, Benoist appears to have played an important role in negotiating its submission to Henri IV in April 1594; he signed the Faculty's act of fidelity in third place, after the dean and sub-dean (Duplessis d'Argentré, II, 509).

¹⁵⁹ Black, pp. 448-49.

¹⁶⁰ Wolfe is considering the contents of one of Benoist's pamphlets here, part of which he paraphrases: 'A new golden age was at hand for France and the Catholic Church [...] now that God had answered their prayers for a Catholic king' (*Voeu et exhortation de continuellement [...] prier pour nostre roy* (Paris, 1597) (PQ117?)), Wolfe, p. 168. Pallier also notes Benoist's belief in a Christian universe where politics and religion are inextricably linked – for Pallier, trying to reconcile a *Ligueur* with his role in the events of St Denis and beyond. Benoist is representative of 'une évolution possible du sentiment religieux'. See Pallier, p. 173.

from papal authorities. It has been observed that Benoist appeared to be one of the most ardent supporters of this move.¹⁶² In conjunction with this reforming zeal came his active stand to reorganise and strengthen the Faculty of Theology internally in terms of discipline, quality of teaching, and the teaching programme.¹⁶³

The work of Higman, although approaching this area from a firmly Protestant point of view, highlights a publishing programme that interconnects with and runs parallel to the one we have established. It is the practical embodiment of certain of Benoist's beliefs. Higman singles out Benoist as the first of the Faculty's theologians 'to attempt a serious theological refutation of Calvinist doctrines in French'.¹⁶⁴ He believes that Benoist was the first to say that one does not have to reject the work of heretics entirely, but that it is permissible to 'faire le tri' and 'clean up' that which is worth saving by using the 'correct' expression, although Higman admits that this principle is implicit in all previous transconfessional borrowings.¹⁶⁵ By listening to Protestants, distinguishing between truth and lie and entering into discussion in print with Protestants, Higman judges that Catholics had identified the way to fight heresy. Censures on vernacular works had failed to stop their circulation, which – annoyingly – won converts.¹⁶⁶ Once this debate began, the Counter Reformation took off. But, as Higman concludes, this took daring. By acting as they did and daring to think past 'c'est du Luther (ou du Calvin), donc c'est faux', Higman believes that Benoist and like-minded writers 'ont montré un nouveau chemin dans les rapports

¹⁶¹ Bergin, pp. 216, 406-07; Bergin also hints at the influence of the Faculty of Theology's censures during Henri III's reign and the League in the pope's deliberations (see p. 407).

¹⁶² Crevier, *Histoire de l'Université de Paris depuis son origine jusqu'à l'année 1600* (Paris, 1761), VII, 58. Pasquier, p. 264.

¹⁶³ Pasquier, p. 266.

¹⁶⁴ Higman, 'Theology in French', p. 365.

¹⁶⁵ Francis Higman, 'Luther, Calvin et les docteurs', in *Lire et découvrir*, pp. 305-20 (p. 319). See also Higman's '*Advertissemens*', p. 570: purifying Protestant works is 'l'aspect le plus original et remarquable de la position de Benoist'; and p. 571: 'c'est la grande originalité de René Benoist, et son grand mérite, que d'avoir accepté pleinement le débat entre les confessions, et d'avoir tenté [...] de faire le tri entre le "vrai" et le "faux"'.
¹⁶⁶ Higman, 'Luther, Calvin et les docteurs', p. 320.

avec la Réforme protestante.’¹⁶⁷ Higman is adamant that Benoist’s allegiance to the Catholic Church is unquestionable:

Aucun doute ne plane sur René Benoist: c’est un des plus ardents défenseurs de l’Eglise catholique et romaine, et l’écrivain français le plus prolifique de tous contre les enseignements protestants, et plus spécifiquement contre le calvinisme.¹⁶⁸

As Higman comments, ‘il ne s’agit jamais d’un compromis chez lui.’¹⁶⁹ It seems to me that Higman thus demonstrates Benoist’s willingness and ability to think beyond a reactionary, ultra-orthodox stance and the accepted position. Benoist shows ‘daring’ (Higman’s expression), innovation, and independent critical thinking; he is a questioning Catholic able to challenge the *status quo*. However, at no moment does Benoist show sympathy for Protestantism; he uses his independence of mind to defend and strengthen the Catholic Church. Crucially, Benoist understands the need to produce works in the vernacular in order to provide texts accessible to the laity.

In fact, Benoist’s output shows two main objectives: firstly, the destruction of heresy through polemical argument; secondly, the provision of devotional and didactic material for the Catholic masses, the latter linking very clearly back to pre-Reformation movements. Wanegffelen has helped to situate Benoist’s spiritual agenda – for instance, Benoist’s position appears evangelical in many respects – whilst Wolfe’s research contributes to an understanding of the political aspect involved: Benoist’s ultimate aim was to maintain religious and political unity in France, but with an internally reformed Catholic Church the victor. Higman’s research, although not entirely intentionally, highlights an approach engendered by this and certain of the practical means and tools by which Benoist sought to bring about change and to contribute to the revitalising of the Catholic Church. A wider, more determined and concerted programme than is suggested by either Wanegffelen or Higman appears to be emerging; indeed, their work may

¹⁶⁷ Higman, ‘Luther, Calvin et les docteurs’, p. 320.

¹⁶⁸ Higman, ‘*Advertissemens*’, p. 564.

¹⁶⁹ Higman, ‘*Advertissemens*’, p. 567.

seem to conflict in some respects. As will be shown later, Wanegffelen perhaps underestimates the many ways in which Benoist looked to pre-Reformation trends other than evangelical and humanist thought, both to defend Catholicism and to attack Protestants, as well as underestimating Benoist's combative spirit as regards heretics: Benoist was a Counter-Reformation theologian intent on the destruction of heresy. Higman does not appear to appreciate fully the extent to which Benoist was influenced by pre-Reformation currents such as those treated by Wanegffelen; indeed, he does not explicitly make the link back to the pre-Reformation period. Upon examination of Benoist's devotional and didactic works, which include, for instance, the Book of Hours, the *Grand Ordinaire*, and hagiographical material, it becomes apparent that Benoist had in mind a programme for the vernacular religious instruction of the laity; Scripture was an important part of this instruction, too.

As we have seen, twentieth-century historians have offered conflicting interpretations concerning Benoist. When Carlo de Clercq calls him 'une curieuse figure de [sic] XVI^e siècle français',¹⁷⁰ we might be tempted to agree, had we read only selected works of the man. However, if put in context, and with the explanations provided by an amalgam of the theories detailed above, most peculiarities and foibles are explained. Remaining oddities such as the sympathetic funeral oration of the Guise are easily understood if one considers the turbulent times and real danger which Benoist faced. Out of context, Benoist may seem a strange character. There is perhaps no better way of demonstrating the confusion that has surrounded Benoist for so long than by looking at the entries in the bibliography of G. de La Croix du Maine, which has been heavily revised.¹⁷¹ The entries present a very odd picture of the theologian. After

¹⁷⁰ De Clercq, 168.

¹⁷¹ G. de La Croix du Maine and Du Verdier, *Les Bibliothèques françoises de La Croix du Maine et de Du Verdier Sieur de Vauprivas; Nouvelle édition, dédiée au roi, revue, corrigée et augmentée d'un discours sur le progrès des lettres en France, et des remarques historiques, critiques et littéraires de M. de la Monnoye et de M. le président Bouhier, de l'Académie françoise; de M. Falconet, de l'Académie des belles-lettres. Par M. Rigoley de Juvigny, conseiller honoraire au Parlement de Metz*, 6 vols (Paris: Saillant & Nyon, 1772-1773), II (1772), 359-63.

sympathetic treatment from La Croix du Maine,¹⁷² an additional note provided by M. Rigoley de Juvigny fails to understand Benoist's stance during the League.¹⁷³ In another note, M. de la Monnoye misses the point as regards Benoist's Bible translation.¹⁷⁴ This is followed by yet another note, apparently by Rigoley de Juvigny, which, although sympathetic, offers a modified account of Benoist under the League.¹⁷⁵ Having read this, readers could not be blamed for feeling bewildered and perplexed.¹⁷⁶

* * *

Conclusion

Benoist has been subjected to miscomprehension and analysis out of context; he has been misused by historians attempting to fit a historical figure to pre-existing historical theories. Only with the willingness of recent researchers to rethink the confessional boundaries is Benoist's idiosyncratic behaviour convincingly

¹⁷² '[...] homme très-éloquent, et des plus célèbres entre tous ceux de sa profession, tant pour ses prédications ordinaires, que pour les livres en nombre infini, lesquels il a mis en lumière.' La Croix du Maine, II, 359-60.

¹⁷³ '[...] il paroît cependant qu'il étoit timide dans le temps des fureurs de la Ligue, lorsqu'il exhortoit son peuple à la soumission dûe aux Rois. La fin de ses discours ambigus étoit ordinairement, *Nous en dirions davantage, mais ce peuple est si malheureux, qu'il veut être trompé.*' M. Rigoley de Juvigny, La Croix du Maine, II, 362. This annotator claims that Henri III nominated Benoist *lecteur royal* in 1583 (II, 363).

¹⁷⁴ 'Ce fut à René Benoist une grande témérité d'oser, ne sachant ni Hébreu, ni Grec, entreprendre de traduire, en François, l'Ancien Testament et le Nouveau. Sa prétendue version, où il n'avoit fait que retoucher celle de Genève, bien loin de lui faire honneur, lui attira la censure de ses Confrères les Docteurs, et du Pape.' M. de la Monnoye, La Croix du Maine, II, 363.

¹⁷⁵ 'Il est certain que cette Traduction de la Bible en langue vulgaire, l'attachement de René Benoist au parti du Roi, quoiqu'il eût des attentions marquées pour les Chefs de la Ligue; l'aversion de quelques Corps Religieux, dont il n'approuvoit pas les entreprises séditeuses, le firent regarder à Rome comme un Calviniste mitigé; c'étoit un honnête homme de moeurs douces, bon Catholique, et un très-bon Ecclésiastique, auquel on ne pouvoit rien reprocher que son inclination à ménager tous les intérêts, sans cep[er]ndant se livrer au mauvais parti, ce qui, dans les temps orageux, tourne presque toujours mal pour ceux dont les passions douces et honnêtes ne les portent pas aux extrêmes.' [Rigoley de Juvigny?], La Croix du Maine, II, 363. This note was conceivably penned by M. Falconet; it is directly followed by a final note on Benoist by this commentator.

explained; in fact, it is the events that initially appeared idiosyncratic which provide credible answers. Problems arise when terms such as '*Ligueur*' and 'orthodox' are used and applied in blanket fashion. These can signify different things to different people, and conceivably alter according to the times. If Benoist is orthodox, we need to know by whose standards and to have a clear definition of orthodoxy.

On the other hand, miscomprehension of this figure is understandable. Benoist's longevity, numerous activities and high productivity render him difficult to appreciate fully. When comments are reduced to footnote level, hasty judgements and categories are thrust onto personalities. It is unfortunate that historians have seized on certain discrepancies in his career and work by which to characterise him. However, by exploring, comparing and refining numerous ideas, a plausible pattern of behaviour seems to emerge; Benoist's 'indiscretions' are explained and, in fact, there are relatively few moments of inconsistency in a long and eventful career.

The evidence so far indicates that in order to take the Catholic Church forwards, Benoist looked backwards to ideas from an earlier era. He was in the mould of those interested in evangelical ideas; at the same time, he was a Gallican and royalist. As we have seen, Benoist's name can be bracketed with those of an earlier generation. It is no coincidence that the name of Gérard Roussel of the Meaux circle has been mentioned alongside that of René Benoist.

Benoist saw the shortcomings of the Gallican Church; for instance, a reform of the clergy was vital. As will be demonstrated, Benoist believed that the laity had been deprived for too long of vernacular religious works which could act as arms to fight heresy (polemical texts) and, most importantly to this study, to defend and fortify the faithful (devotional and instructional material). Instructing the

¹⁷⁶ Few works rival this publication for its inconsistency within one text. Twentieth-century French Catholic encyclopaedias usually ignore La Croix du Maine and depend on Pasquier.

Catholic masses was a defence of Catholicism, combatting feelings of alienation amongst the laity and securing their fidelity and, equally importantly, it brought about spiritual renewal. Benoist's work was a continuation of that begun by those at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The following chapters of this thesis will show the influence of publishing trends seen in the pre-Reformation period on Benoist's work; in particular, Scriptural translation (Chapter 3) and the phenomenally successful Book of Hours (Chapter 4). It is not only the kind of text that Benoist chose to publish which is of interest; so too is the spirit in which he went about providing these works, both rhetorically in polemical argument, and more practically through the presentation and format of his texts. Before examining these questions in detail, Chapter 2 will explore Benoist's approach to writing in a more general sense and show how the theologian went about delivering a programme of vernacular religious instruction to the laity; in many ways, he was more a practically minded, yet highly capable and efficient, 'facilitator' than he was a skilled craftsman. As with Benoist's religious and political beliefs, his list of publications is far from being without rationale; it displays cogency and coherence.

The most extensive work on Benoist remains that of Pasquier and most historians refer to this biography. It is therefore astonishing that many appear to ignore and misconstrue what he says and that so many disparate portraits of Benoist have been generated. It is also surprising that such an important religious and political powerbroker has been neglected in terms of modern research. The Catholic Church was victorious and he was one of its most active supporters and defenders. Contemporaries certainly believed him to be of paramount importance in defending the French Catholic Church. They would undoubtedly recognise the situation as outlined by another scholar of Pasquier's generation:

A Paris, comme controversiste, Du Moulin éclipse [...] tous ses collègues, du côté protestant; tandis que du côté catholique plusieurs combattants se rangent contre lui presque sur le même rang [...] nous nous bornerons à citer les principaux [...] ils sont de ceux que l'armée catholique pouvait mettre en avant avec le plus de confiance [...] Un

cardinal marche en tête [...] du Perron [...] Puis viennent [...] le Jésuite Cotton, l'oratorien Bérulle, et le curé Benoist.¹⁷⁷

Following research and re-evaluation such as that by Wanegffelen, Benoist may yet gain an important position – and one that seems warranted – in the works of modern historians dealing with sixteenth-century France.

¹⁷⁷ Jacques Pannier, *L'Église Réformée de Paris sous Henri IV. Rapports de l'Église et de l'état. Vie publique et privée des Protestants. Leur part dans l'histoire de la capitale, le mouvement des idées, les arts, la société, le commerce* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1911), p. 230; Pannier concludes by mentioning J. Suarez and Coëffeteau. Pannier's comment on Benoist – 'non moins sincère défenseur du catholicisme romain [than the others named], **et pourtant traducteur de la Bible et penseur si voisin parfois des adversaires qu'il est suspect à ses propres coreligionnaires ...** [sic]' (Pannier, p. 230; my highlighting) – can now be explained in the light of this chapter's conclusions.

CHAPTER 2

Benoist the Writer

René Benoist's writing style and approach to writing have not to date been the central focus of any study, although they have at times been commented on by historians and literary experts alike. As we shall see, it has long been the norm to consider the work of Benoist – and that of his fellow Catholic polemicists – as inferior, particularly when compared to Protestant authors, and not worthy of note. G. Wylie Sypher summarises the long line of contemptuous dismissals:

The eighteenth century editor of the single most essential compilation of documents for the period, the *Mémoires de Condé* [...] explained that he had chosen to omit nearly every Catholic piece since they seemed to him so inferior in style and substance that he thought them not worth collecting and re-publishing. Henri Hauser, author of the standard general handbook of sources for the history of sixteenth century France, noted this judgement with approval, observing that Catholic polemic deserved no attention since it deliberately wallowed 'in triviality, in filthy vulgarity.' Carrière's meticulous survey of the materials available for the history of the French church dismisses these works as no more than a collective repository of derisory insults in the worst of taste. Historians of sixteenth century French literature have been equally reluctant to heed writings so apparently devoid of cultural or stylistic merit, especially in contrast with those of Protestantism, which could boast some of the best writers in the national tongue. Recent histories of the Counter-Reformation, such as Delumeau's and Dickens', chose not even to mention this embarrassing portion of the Catholic heritage.¹

However, a reappraisal of sixteenth-century figures such as Benoist yields illuminating and unexpected results; the situation is not as it once appeared, as we have already seen.

Benoist's output was noteworthy in that it was chiefly written in the vernacular, for Benoist was presumably formed and given a firm grounding in Latin; he belonged to a generation more used to writing about theology in Latin than in French. Moreover, his output was huge and several of his works went through

numerous reprints.² His writing was successful at the time and therefore must have been accessible; it must also have exerted considerable influence over those who read it. For modern commentators, Benoist's work should be viewed as important in that it came from a Catholic theologian at the forefront of the wave of Counter-Reformation response to Protestant 'heresy' written in the vernacular. Of course, his publications contained more than just polemic, as will be discussed in greater detail in Chapters 3 and 4. His writing style and approach to writing in a more general sense therefore warrant closer inspection. In this chapter, I aim to bring together the existing body of thought on Benoist's style in order to assess the main reasons for its dismissal and to establish several of its most important characteristics; in addition to this, I aim to explore his approach as a writer: for instance, his reasons for writing, the style he thought appropriate for this and certain of the methods he employed as a writer. The examination of these issues will contribute further to our understanding of the motivations and agenda of Benoist, as well as providing an indication as to the practical way in which Benoist went about delivering a programme of instruction to the laity; the theologian employed strategies within his publications beyond polemical argument to guide and to convince his readership. A survey of certain of the texts in which he employed these skills will be provided in Chapter 4.

Benoist's work was a mixture of the polemical, devotional and didactic; these are frequently interwoven and juxtaposed in the same work. As such, this study does not always seek to divide comment on Benoist's style into these categories; assessment, like the work itself, tends to overlap.

¹ Sypher, "Faisant ce qu'il leur vient à plaisir", 61-62. Sypher appears to be referring in particular to polemic up to 1562; nevertheless, his assessment is also largely true as regards Catholic polemic after this date.

² For instance, according to Émile Pasquier's bibliography (Pasquier, *Un curé de Paris*), Benoist's *Claire probation de la necessaire manducation de la substantielle et reale humanité de Jesus Christ [...]* (PQ2) was printed six times (1561, 1564, 1566, 1569, 1570 and 1586); his treatise concerning the Cross of the Gastines (PQ40) was published on nine occasions (1571, 1572, 1586, 1587 (twice), 1596 (thrice), as well as an undated edition of c.1590 (information on this last item from the folders of the St Andrews Sixteenth-Century French Book Project)).

Benoist: ‘typical’ Counter-Reformation polemicist?

When dealing with Catholic polemic of this time, there has frequently been an overlapping of the considerations of the tone of such work, its content and the manipulation of language and syntax by the author; all, as we have seen from Sypher’s comment, have been judged as lacking in sophistication and subtlety.³ Benoist’s work does not escape this stereotype. In modern times, Benoist has been portrayed along with other Catholic polemicists as a vicious opponent of Protestantism (true), the content and tone of his work being poisonous and inflammatory. Here, where the tone of Benoist’s work is principally under consideration, Barbara Diefendorf’s scorn is clear:

Every year he turned out one or more treatises with **pompous and didactic titles** [...] Benoist produced treatises defending many aspects of Catholic doctrine and ritual, and he also wrote **sweeping attacks** on the ‘blasphemies’ of the heretics and their ‘corruption’ of the faith, but his favorite subjects, the ones to which he returned time and again, were the sacrifice of the Mass and the real presence in the Eucharist.

The inevitable consequence of these sermons and treatises, which combined explanation of Catholic beliefs with **vivid denunciations** of Calvinist ‘errors’, was to **fan the flames** of the theological disputes that were at the heart of the Reformation quarrel. They brought the symbols of this dispute out of their theological sanctuaries and into the streets.⁴

As we have seen in Chapter 1, Larissa Taylor endorses many of Diefendorf’s findings in this area⁵ and Robert Kingdon also appears to subscribe to this school of thought, describing Benoist’s pamphlet on the affair of the Cross of the Gastines as a ‘flamboyant denunciation’ and ‘inflammatory’.⁶ P. Calendini, too, comments that ‘son style même se ressent de la violence que, de part et d’autre, on apportait à ces polémiques’.⁷

³ For a discussion of the invective generated by Catholic polemicists (but, importantly, in the light of Sypher’s work), see Luc Racaut’s doctoral research: Luc Racaut, ‘Hatred in Print: Aspects of Anti-Protestant Polemic in the French Wars of Religion’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of St Andrews, 1999); see also the same author’s *Hatred in Print* (2002).

⁴ Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross*, p. 149. My highlighting.

⁵ Taylor, *Heresy and Orthodoxy*, pp. 209-10.

⁶ Kingdon, *Myths about the St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacres*, pp. 40, 117.

⁷ *Dictionnaire d’histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques*, ed. by Alfred Baudrillart and others, 27 vols (Paris: Librairie Letouzey et Ané, 1912-), VII (1934), col. 1378. Entry by P. Calendini.

Generalisations made concerning Benoist's work are frequently uncomplimentary as regards the tone and content of his writing, as are comments about individual works by Benoist. For Diefendorf and Kingdon, Benoist appears to fit neatly into the category of 'typical' Counter-Reformation polemicist, with little to distinguish him from the rest. This is not my experience. On closer inspection, the nature and style of his polemic, when taken as a whole, is perhaps surprising; he remains relatively irenic unless circumstances demand otherwise and his position is particularly precarious. Whilst the themes Benoist uses when discussing Protestants and his representation of heresy can undoubtedly be traditional in nature,⁸ in general, the tone of his invective is less violent and his polemic is less unpleasant and more moderate than that of many other Catholic authors.⁹ Pasquier, too, talks of his 'conseils si mesurés'.¹⁰ As we shall see later, Benoist does not confine criticisms to heretics in his polemic and frequently attacks the behaviour of those in his own camp, especially abuses within the clergy. Furthermore, as Diefendorf intimates above, Benoist's uppermost preoccupation was to minister to the needs of the Catholic masses; much of his time and energy was channelled into providing devotional and instructional material. Benoist was far from being the typical Catholic polemicist.

⁸ Racaut's work ('Hatred in Print' (1999) and *Hatred in Print* (2002)) demonstrates the extent to which certain arguments employed against heresy in the work of Benoist and his colleagues were traditional; he explores several common themes which emerge from a reading of Catholic polemic. For instance, in *Hatred in Print* (2002), Racaut identifies Benoist's implicit association of heresy with lechery (p. 33) and his use in condemning Protestantism of misogynistic argumentation, which, for example, berated a 'feminization of society' (pp. 89, 94). In this, Benoist is clearly conservative and far from innovative, as the author shows. It should be noted that Racaut appears to have consulted only a small sample of Benoist's work (see pp. 134-35); he includes six Benoist texts in his bibliography, spanning the years 1561-65, although one work is a 1567 reprint of a 1565 publication.

⁹ I am referring here to the polemicists such as Robert Ceneau and Antoine de Mouchy discussed in Racaut's work. My thanks to Dr Luc Racaut for his advice in this area.

¹⁰ This comment refers particularly to his output from the time of the League onwards. Pasquier, p. 312.

1

Style

Let us now consider Benoist's style in greater detail than by those mentioned above; content will be dealt with separately, in the second half of this chapter, when analysing Benoist's approach as a writer. Firstly, we shall examine the brief assessments which have been made concerning Benoist's prose style, before moving on to a consideration of more detailed judgements.

a) Brief assessments and the consequences of developing literary tastes

Unfavourable reviews have circulated since the period in which the theologian wrote, but it soon becomes apparent that many of these can be attributed to developing seventeenth-century tastes, as a remark attributed to Cardinal du Perron illustrates:

Benoist [...] estoit un mauvais escrivain. Il ne se trouvoit point de verbe en ce qu'il escrivoit. Il entrelassoit son style de parentheses et ne revenoit jamais au logis. Il n'y a pas un mot pour rire dans ce qu'il escrivoit. Il est maussade.¹¹

Although it has been suggested that Du Perron and Benoist were not on good terms,¹² it is evident, if one looks through the quotations by Benoist provided in this chapter, that for the changing literary tastes this might appear to be a fair appraisal. It should be remembered that Du Perron was younger than Benoist and

¹¹ P. Feret, *La Faculté de Théologie de Paris et ses docteurs les plus célèbres: Époque moderne*, 7 vols (Paris: Alphonse Picard et Fils, 1900-1910), II (1901), 152-53. A similar comment is found in Falconet's addition in La Croix du Maine and Du Verdier, *Les Bibliothèques françoises de La Croix du Maine et de Du Verdier Sieur de Vauprivas*, II, 363: 'Peu d'Auteurs ont autant écrit, et aussi mal; la construction de ses phrases est toujours obscure et embrouillée, son style est maussade.' It is unclear from the layout whether this is the opinion of Falconet or Du Perron.

¹² 'Le Cardinal du Perron ne l'aimoit pas, et lui estoit secrètement opposé.' Falconet, *La Croix du Maine*, II, 363.

would be judging work according to aesthetic criteria generated towards the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth century.

The comments of another contemporary, Pierre de L'Estoile, are no less scathing, although here both content and language could be under fire. He refers to Benoist's *Advertissements à la France* as being viewed as 'si mal faits, qu'ils ne méritoient response',¹³ the published Orléans sermon is criticised ('ce sermon est si mal tissu, et composé pour une palinodie, telle que ce bon homme a pensé faire pour se justifier, qu'elle ressemble à ces oiseaux englués, lesquels tant plus ils taschent à se dépestrer des glus, d'autant plus ils s'engluent.'),¹⁴ and finally, Benoist's last work (the *Declaration*) is dismissed as 'bagatelle', 'on n'entend du tout rien'.¹⁵ We should perhaps bear in mind that all of these texts are problematic in some way: the *Advertissements* were published at a tense political time and Benoist no doubt intended obscurity;¹⁶ the published sermon was deliberately banal, following the controversy and uproar surrounding its delivery; and the *Declaration* was published after Benoist's death and appears to have been assembled hastily by someone other than Benoist. However, this criticism could equally be due to stylistic concerns and the evolution in literary taste that occurred between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Benoist's sentences frequently appear long and tortuous to the modern eye (as can be seen from the examples within this chapter) and lacked the qualities admired towards the end of his career; indeed, simply the length of Benoist's sentences would have been the subject of disdain by the beginning of the seventeenth century.

However, not all critics have been quite so damning; significantly, this group of commentators tend to judge Benoist's style against that of his own era. E. Levesque judges that 'son style ne manque pas [...] de force et de trait; mais il a

¹³ 28 February 1591. L'Estoile, *Mémoires-Journaux*, V, 74.

¹⁴ April 1601. L'Estoile, VII, 290-91.

¹⁵ 19 May 1608. L'Estoile, IX, 75-76.

¹⁶ The first and second *Advertissements* were published in 1589, the third in 1591.

surtout une certaine naïveté mêlée de finesse'.¹⁷ Feret is perhaps the most sympathetic:

Éloquent, il le fut: autrement on ne saurait expliquer la grande influence qu'il exerça nombre d'années sur sa paroisse de Saint-Eustache. Du reste, son élocution était facile, sa pensée spirituelle, originale, sa parole entraînant; l'à-propos et le trait ne lui faisaient pas défaut. Mais il serait injuste de lui demander la correction du siècle dont il vit l'aurore.

Cette réflexion s'applique à ses nombreux écrits. Qu'on ne perde pas de vue, d'ailleurs, qu'il fut surtout un écrivain de circonstance, et qu'à ce titre, tant sous le rapport politique que sous le rapport religieux, il fut souvent obligé de revenir sur les mêmes sujets, ce qui occasionnait d'inévitables redites. Ajoutons que, dans plusieurs de ses opuscules, il prend et conserve assez bien l'allure de pamphlétaire.¹⁸

Feret acknowledges Benoist's shortcomings ('ses incorrections et ses trivialités'), whilst explaining these as 'les défauts de l'époque'.¹⁹ He believes that the assessment of La Croix du Maine seen in Chapter 1 is more appropriate than that allegedly formed by Du Perron: Benoist was highly eloquent and 'des plus celebres entre tous ceux de sa profession tant par ses prédications ordinaires que par les livres'.²⁰ Benoist's writing enjoyed enduring success over a fifty-year publishing period; it was towards the end in particular that his style was held up to ridicule.

¹⁷ *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique, contenant l'exposé des doctrines de la théologie catholique, leurs preuves et leur histoire*, ed. by A. Vacant, E. Mangenot and E. Amann, 15 vols (Paris: Librairie Letouzey et Ané, 1923-46), II (1923), col. 646. Entry by E. Levesque.

¹⁸ Feret, II, 152.

¹⁹ Feret, II, 153.

²⁰ Feret, II, 153. La Croix du Maine does not flatter blindly: for Benoist's Catholic predecessors Pierre Doré and Artus Désiré, his entries are short and factual, as are they for Antoine du Val and Antoine de Mouchy, the theologian's colleagues. Protestant authors Guillaume Farel and Pierre Viret receive a similar treatment, whilst Jean Calvin is dealt with in a particularly cautious manner; La Croix du Maine is careful when dealing with heretics. He does, however, show enthusiasm in his entries for Robert Estienne (both father and son), Pierre de Ronsard, Michel de Montaigne and Jacques Davy du Perron, all of whose talents have been widely recognised.

b) Studying the theologian's style more thoroughly

i) The conclusions of Émile Pasquier, Francis Higman and Peter Bayley

A small number of modern commentators have examined Benoist's writing more closely, namely Émile Pasquier (Benoist's biographer), and two commentators approaching the area as textual analysts: Francis Higman and Peter Bayley.²¹ The results have been mixed, but are not incompatible.

Pasquier had probably read more of Benoist's work than any other critic. His assessment of Benoist's writing is largely sympathetic, although not entirely enthusiastic. He ranks Benoist higher than many of his colleagues. Of one of Benoist's early works he remarks 'l'oeuvre ne méritait pas d'être très remarquée, bien qu'elle fût écrite dans une langue assez pure, plus concise que celle de beaucoup d'autres ouvrages du même genre parus à cette époque'.²² Sometimes a clear structure is distinguished, sometimes this is missing:²³

Tantôt l'opuscule se présente sous forme d'un traité complet sur la matière, parfaitement ordonné, sans lacunes ni longueurs, comme le *Traité des Images*;²⁴ tantôt Benoist n'a pas pris le temps de composer, il écrit à mesure que lui reviennent à l'esprit les objections qu'il a lues ou entendues, d'où des digressions, des répétitions.²⁵

Pasquier conveys the picture of a body of work of differing quality; even when writing in the Latin that would have been the most natural medium for a Catholic

²¹ Pasquier, *Un curé de Paris*; Francis Higman, various articles in his *Lire et découvrir*; Peter Bayley, *French Pulpit Oratory 1598-1650: A Study in Themes and Styles, with a Descriptive Catalogue of Printed Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).

²² *Homélie de la Nativité de Jésus Christ [...] (1558) (PQ1)*; Pasquier, p. 42.

²³ Pasquier is particularly impressed with one work (*Manifeste et nécessaire probation de l'adoration de Jesus Christ [...] (1562) (PQ7)*): 'Aussi est-ce pour le lecteur une surprise de rencontrer en ce sermon un plan très clairement énoncé et développé avec méthode, vigueur et clarté, en trois points, subdivisés eux-mêmes d'une manière uniforme et classique. Il suffirait de changer quelques expressions vieilles, de supprimer les noms de Wiclef, d'Æcolampade et de Calvin pour l'approprier à notre temps', Pasquier, p. 52. However, Pasquier is disappointed with another text (*La Maniere de cognoistre salutairement Jesus Christ [...] (1561) (PQ8)*): 'Le plan manque de précision et l'auteur se laisse aller à développer des idées étrangères [...]', Pasquier, p. 53.

²⁴ PQ12, published in 1564.

²⁵ Pasquier, pp. 55-56.

theologian of his time, Benoist's writing is 'trop peu cicéronien pour flatter le goût des humanistes'. However, Pasquier asserts again at this point that Benoist's writing is 'supérieur à la plupart des controversistes de son époque', in that his language is 'pure et correcte'.²⁶ He does not go as far as claiming that Benoist is amongst the most talented of sixteenth-century writers, however.²⁷

Higman's research on Benoist's writing is the most comprehensive and thus convincing undertaken in this area. He reaches somewhat contradictory conclusions on Benoist, which to some extent agree with Pasquier's impressionistic analysis that found certain texts were praiseworthy, others poor. Particularly interesting is his comparison of Benoist's syntax with that of Calvin whose 'eloquence' Benoist acknowledged.²⁸ Higman samples Benoist's work to investigate the sentence structure.²⁹ His conclusion is as follows:

If anyone had benefited from the example of Calvin's prose style it should surely have been Benoist [due to his admiration of Calvin's style]. Yet, at least as regards sentence structure, there is little trace of influence [...]

Certain characteristics of Benoist's prose take us back, beyond the stylistic features of Calvin, to the heavily latinized language of the earliest attempts of the Sorbonne theologians to write French: for example the involuted subordinate clauses, the use of participial constructions, and of the accusative and infinitive. One could add, from further explorations, that Benoist's vocabulary is also far more dependent on Latin than Calvin's [...] The use of doublets – pairs of adjectives, nouns or verbs [...] and certain weighty conjunctions [...] owe far more to the language of the law than to Calvin.³⁰

²⁶ Pasquier, p. 124.

²⁷ 'Nous ne disons pas que son style est toujours aussi pur et précis que celui de certains écrivains de son temps. Il peut y avoir parfois une abondance de mots, une diffusion regrettable, mais ce sont là moindres défauts et qui n'empêchèrent pas les contemporains de Benoist de louer son éloquence.' Pasquier, pp. 183-84. Pasquier is also dealing with Benoist's preaching ability here.

²⁸ Higman characterizes Calvin's style with reference to 'the simplicity of his vocabulary, the avoidance of latinisms and the quest for firm delineation of word meanings [...] his control of syntax and in particular the avoidance of that superabundance of subordinate clauses so typical of the prose of the period in general'. As Higman proceeds to comment, the only easily accessible point of comparison linguistically speaking is the analysis of sentence structure. Higman, 'Theology in French', in *Lire et découvrir*, pp. 353-70 (p. 362). For Benoist's opinion of Calvin's style, see p. 73 below.

²⁹ Higman, 'Theology in French', pp. 365-66; the Benoist text used is the *Epistre à Jean Calvin* (1564) (PQ13).

³⁰ Pasquier, by contrast, noted 'une langue assez pure et moins chargée de latinismes qu'on pourrait l'attendre d'un homme habitué au latin par ses études et son enseignement'. Pasquier, p. 312.

Thus far, indeed, our explorations of a potential influence of Calvin’s style are disappointing and seemingly fruitless: even those writers who are most appreciative of the qualities of Calvin’s French seem quite unable to adopt even his simplest techniques as a model.³¹

In support, Higman provides a statistical comparison between Calvin and Benoist. This underlines the difference in the length of their sentences:

Table 2.1 *Comparing the sentence structure of Calvin and Benoist*³²

Text	Sample (words)	Number of sentences	Main verbs	Subordinate clauses	Average words per sentences	Ratio main: subordinate
Calvin, <i>Excuse</i> (1544) ³³	509	20	21	41	25.4	1: 1.9
Benoist, <i>Epistre</i> (1564)	500	7	8	36	71.4	1: 4.5

The difference in the ratio of main to subordinate clauses in the two authors is sizeable and explains why Benoist’s language lacks the clarity and precision displayed by Calvin; it also supports Du Perron’s assessment of Benoist.

As for Benoist’s organisation of thought, Higman states of Benoist’s 1568 *Advertissement apologetique*³⁴ that it is ‘assez long [...] Benoist y déverse son amertume devant les calomnies dont il a souffert, dans un plaidoyer passablement désorganisé’.³⁵

Benoist does not appear to exhibit the linguistic linearity of Calvin as identified by Higman.³⁶ His prose often provides examples of a disordered, non-linear approach. If we use the above research of Higman, we could conclude that

³¹ Higman, ‘Theology in French’, p. 366.
³² Higman, ‘Theology in French’, p. 368. The table here has been slightly modified: the syntax of Guillaume Farel, Pierre Viret and Jacques Davy du Perron are also compared to that of Calvin in Higman’s study, but their results have been removed.
³³ *Excuse aux Nicodemites*.
³⁴ Found at the rear of Benoist’s 1568 bilingual Bible (C399, fols &1^r-&3^r).
³⁵ Higman, ‘*Advertissemens*’, in *Lire et découvrir*, pp. 563-71 (p. 568).
³⁶ Francis Higman, ‘Linearity in Calvin’s Thought’, in *Lire et découvrir*, pp. 391-401.

Benoist's sentence structure epitomises the 'steamroller approach', used by those such as his predecessor Pierre Doré.³⁷ This is in contrast to linearity as described by Higman:

To put it at its simplest, Calvin invented the short sentence. Instead of trying to roll the whole argument along at the same time, he makes one point, then proceeds to the next one, then to the next, and so on. Whereas most sentences written in the sixteenth century (in a debate context) have eight, twelve, fifteen subordinate clauses, Calvin's rarely have more than three. Calvin's prose is not the steamroller but the cutting edge: not the broad front, but the *line*. Linearity is the primary feature of Calvin's language.³⁸

Higman argues that linearity of syntax and of thought are closely linked; the implications of his research are more than just syntactical and linguistic: 'what Calvin creates is not only a way of writing French but an intellectual weapon for use in the battle of argument, an analytical tool.'³⁹ The work by Benoist under consideration above shows that he does not possess this tool.

Bayley's work corroborates these findings.⁴⁰ Looking at one of Benoist's printed sermons, he categorises the style used as 'plain prose' ('the flat and relatively unemotive language of exposition'), the almost unvarying use of which strikes Bayley as a quite remarkable feature of Benoist's work.⁴¹ He argues that Benoist has 'no sense of stylistic differentiation' and makes 'few concessions to ornamentation', due partly to 'a desire to maintain the cohesion of the argument'.⁴² Bayley's example of a sentence from Benoist thus seems to be

a single, massive, sprawling sentence [...] A single example suffices for us to see the essential elements of this style, with its looseness of syntax, repetition, use of wordpairs and elaborately irrelevant parentheses. This sort of peroration [...] is not met with again in this period.⁴³

³⁷ Analysing the work of Doré using a graph analysis technique formulated by R. A. Sayce, Higman comments: 'This method of writing is almost universal in Calvin's period. It gives the sense of the steamroller, advancing on a broad front, moving the whole argument, pro and contra, along at the same time'. Higman, 'Linearity', p. 395.

³⁸ Higman, 'Linearity', p. 397.

³⁹ Higman, 'Linearity', p. 397.

⁴⁰ He considers only a small quantity of Benoist's late printed sermons: three works are listed in his catalogue. Bayley, pp. 198-99.

⁴¹ *Sermon de la disposition requise pour le lavement des pieds* (1601) (PQ122). Bayley, p. 76.

⁴² Bayley, pp. 76-77.

⁴³ Bayley, p. 77.

Bayley's comments indicate an unwieldy, clumsy piece of prose, lacking clarity and elegance, displaying an outmoded manner of expression. This largely fits the assessment of other critics. Bayley is, of course, looking at a period towards the end of Benoist's career, when Benoist was advanced in years; Benoist's linguistic habits were, however, those of several generations before the point Bayley commences his study. Comparison with others of this later era will not show Benoist in a flattering light.

Bayley's comment on a second sermon by Benoist is also uncomplimentary; it provides 'a curious example of the vestigial survival of an earlier technique'.⁴⁴ Various sections and section headings are imposed on the text (unclear whether by Benoist or another abridger). Bayley comments that

An elaborate technique for the analysis of texts has been rather clumsily imposed on a simple politico-religious speech for which it is clearly unsuited.

This tension between a rigorous adherence to traditional forms and a rambling freedom of treatment is apparent in large numbers of sermons [...] written early in our period.⁴⁵

In connection with this he notes 'the continuing influence of the **medieval** subdivisions and the obsession with numbered points'.⁴⁶ Benoist too is a survival of an earlier time by this point. The features underlined by Higman in a Benoist publication of the 1560s are no doubt still to be found in his work at the end of the century. By the 1560s, Benoist was in his forties, his writing habits were already formed and his early influences could not have included the work of Calvin. Whatever habits he had by the 1560s, they were sure to persist. As Higman concludes, it was the next generation of writers, especially those such as Du Perron who were brought up as Huguenots (even though Du Perron later

⁴⁴ *Abrégé d'un sermon* (1600) (PQ121). Bayley, p. 103.

⁴⁵ Bayley, p. 103.

⁴⁶ Bayley, p. 103. My highlighting.

became a Catholic) who would benefit from the lessons to be learned from Calvin's prose.⁴⁷

However, this is not the full story, as Higman notes in a previous study, for:

When [...] Benoist wrote his *Catholicque discours de la confession sacramentelle* (Paris, G. Chaudiere, 1566 [...]), his syntax bears the stamp of Calvin's careful articulation of the argument:

Quand il est question de la remission des pechez, il est besoing que nous ayons une grande attention: car puis que peché est la maladie qui faict mourir l'ame, la privant de sa vie, qui est la grace de Dieu: et qu'iceluy peché est la cause et comme le pere de la mort, du diable, d'enfer, et tout autre malheur et dereglement, il me semble qu'il n'y a rien plus à desirer que d'en estre nettoiyé, purgé, et guery. Cela est la cause pourquoy l'escripture sainte tant souvent nous advertit et exhorte à recognoistre, detester, laisser, et fuyr le peché (...) (A2r).

The effect is heavier, in the overweighting of subordinate clauses and the repeated use of three or more nouns or verbs; but the basic structure intended is clearly that of Calvin's prose.⁴⁸

Thus Higman proves that Benoist could be more organised, 'linear' and logical, demonstrating moments of linguistic clarity, as he could also be disordered and somewhat clumsy in matters of syntax. The latter was not unusual for members of the Faculty of Theology, who had been slower than the Protestants at turning to the vernacular for theological discussion.⁴⁹

ii) Further examination of Benoist's work

The impression gained from these commentators is that Benoist's work was of varying quality; he was neither the best nor worst example of his time. This too is my experience. A study of Benoist's syntax can yield vastly differing results; Benoist's sentences and organisation of ideas (inextricably linked, as we have seen) frequently take on the non-linear, steamroller approach, but we can equally produce texts which could be used to argue the opposite. Perhaps one of the most

⁴⁷ Higman, 'Theology in French', pp. 353-70 (pp. 366-69).

⁴⁸ PQ31; Francis Higman, 'The Reformation and the French Language', in *Lire et découvrir*, pp. 337-51 (p. 349).

⁴⁹ This is a theme explored by Higman in several of the articles gathered in *Lire et découvrir*.

rigorously organised texts was Benoist’s *Exposition et resolution de certains principaux passages tant du Vieil que du Nouveau Testament, desquelz les heretiques de ce temps abusent contre la foy catholique, et la verité de l’Evangile*, located at the back of his 1566 French Bible.⁵⁰ The passage which follows exhibits a clear progression:

Text from Scripture	Nous lisons en Saint Marc chapitre 7. <i>Ilz me servent en vain enseignans les doctrines et les ordonnances des hommes.</i>
Misinterpretation of heretics	Duquel lieu mal exposé abusent ceux qui en colligent que nostre Seigneur rejette entierement toutes les ordonnances et constitutions humaines: et qui ne veulent point qu’on reçoive et observe en l’Eglise chose qui ne soit contenue, voire exprimee, en l’Escriture.
Specific results	Partant ilz reprouvent tout ce que les Prelats de l’Eglise, estants mesmement és Conciles generaux, ont déterminé et enseigné par l’inspiration du saint Esprit, de la doctrine et profession de la foy et religion Chrestienne. Pareillement ils se rient et gaudissent de toutes les expositions Catholiques des saints Docteurs sur les escritures saintes:
Benoist’s move to attack	mais tandis ilz remplissent le monde de leurs inepties, de leurs songes et impieuses resveries, pour et au lieu des sacrees escritures. Car rien du tout de ce qu’ilz observent et proposent contre ou pardessus la doctrine Catholique, n’est contenu és escritures saintes: lesquelles toutefois ils ont tousjours en la bouche, à quoy je supplie adviser celuy qui ne voudra point estre deceu.
Rejection of misinterpretation	Nostre Seigneur donc ne rejette point absolument en ce lieu la doctrine de la religion, ny les saintes ordonnances faites par les Prelats de l’Eglise: veu que souventesfois il commande de leur rendre obeissance:
Benoist’s reinterpretation	mais il condamne icelles traditions des hommes, pour l’amour desquelles le commandement de Dieu est rejeté, c’est à dire, celles qui contreviennent du tout au commandement de Dieu, et aux escritures saintes. ⁵¹

Throughout the work we see the same pattern and organisation of the text recurring. There is some digression in the work, but the plan is generally adhered

⁵⁰ This text was originally written in Latin and inserted at the end of a Latin Bible (see Chapter 1, note 5). It was translated into the vernacular (but not by Benoist) and numerous reprints followed in both languages and in various expanded or reduced formats (see Chapter 3, note 242).

⁵¹ *Exposition*, ‘Passages de Saint Marc’, fol. 9^v. My divisions.

to. This is not the work of someone incapable of organising their thought and work.⁵²

As Benoist was in fact producing work at speed, for the masses and not an elite, the mixed quality of his output is perhaps of no surprise. His was not painstakingly reworked material. It was not intended to be a great work of literature, merely persuasive. Perhaps he could have created something of greater literary merit if he had concentrated on producing fewer texts, as Pasquier laments:

[...] s'il eût concentré ses études sur quelques questions spéciales d'Écriture Sainte ou de théologie, il aurait pu produire des oeuvres peut-être comparables à celles des grands théologiens que nous venons de nommer [Bellarmine, Maldonat, Baronius, Génébrard].⁵³

Let us now conclude this section on Benoist's style by passing to other aspects of his prose. His writing is, as Bayley comments, denuded of ornamentation. Relatively few images are used and those that are employed often have a basis in Scripture. In particular, Benoist repeatedly uses the image of the fountain, resonant with biblical echoes:⁵⁴

Car ceste beste frauduleuse et cauteleuse [Satan] cognoit que l'Escriture sainte est la trespure fontaine de laquelle tous ceux qui ont soif d'estre vraiment instruits, et de faire leur salut, doivent puiser les eaues de sapience salutaire. Il cognoit le commandement que nostre Seigneur ha fait de perscruter et rechercher les Escritures.⁵⁵ Il cognoit en outre la persuasion et croiance de tous fideles estre telle, que les Escritures saintes ne contiennent sinon une doctrine vraie, sainte et divine: qu'un chacun à icelles doit avoir recours, en fuiant les puantes cloaques et cisternes des resveries humaines. Au moyen de quoy ce serpent tortu, cest inveteré et obstiné ennemy du salut des hommes, en tout temps s'est efforcé d'empoisonner et gaster ceste fontaine et source premiere.⁵⁶

⁵² Having examined Benoist's *Brieve et facile refutation* (1565) (PQ20) written in response to Jean de L'Espine's work, Louis Hugu comments that 'la réfutation qui suit **prend point par point** tous les articles du *Discours* et **les réfute avec verve et ingéniosité**. René Benoist n'a pas peine, en particulier, à montrer la fragilité des raisons de convenance invoquées par son adversaire'. Hugu, *Jean de L'Espine*, p. 65; my highlighting. Again, Benoist is systematic in his method, and, according to Hugu, effective.

⁵³ Pasquier, p. 311.

⁵⁴ For a brief discussion of the diverse Scriptural uses of the fountain, see *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, ed. by Leland Ryken and others (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998), p. 307.

⁵⁵ Joann. 5. (Benoist's note; the full reference is John 5. 39.)

⁵⁶ *Exposition*, introduction, fol. 1^r.

This image is also used in the preface to Benoist's 1566 New Testament in a similar sense.⁵⁷ The Word as a fountain was an image current at the time and also used by Protestants in polemic. Benoist employs the image of the fountain in various ways throughout his work; for instance, in the text from which the above passage comes, he uses it in reference to God, Christ and Scripture, as well as using the image of the fountain of Theology.⁵⁸ He does use techniques such as the rhetorical question and enumeration,⁵⁹ but as Pasquier finds, Benoist's language is ordinary, 'telle que la parlaient les gens de culture moyenne; car c'est pour ceux-là qu'il écrit surtout.'⁶⁰ In a short lexical note, amongst other things, he remarks on a preference for older, more established words and the influence of Rabelais in certain borrowings and the technique of accumulation; these various elements are, he says, commonplace to all sixteenth-century authors.⁶¹

⁵⁷ C379, N1566gui, 'Advertissement par forme de preface et avant propos', fols *2^r-*3^v. Benoist has Psalm 46. 4 firmly in mind for his water imagery at the beginning of this preface.

⁵⁸ *Exposition*: God, fols 3^v, 5^r; Christ, fol. 17^r; Scripture, fols 1^r, 3^r; fountain of Theology, fol. 2^r.

⁵⁹ Benoist is especially inspired on the subject of the shortcomings of the Catholic clergy: 'Car que scauroit on excogiter plus injuste, plus pernicieux et contre Dieu, que de veoir la parole de Dieu contemnée et mesprisée par ceux qui la devroyent honorer, sçavoir et proposer aux autres, lesquels nous voyons entrer en l'Eglise avec une intention sinistre, pour avarice, honneur, oisiveté et delices, et puis s'y porter comme si la Religion Chrestienne estoit une vaine fable, laquelle il faillist jouer par personnages, larves et masques? Comment est-il possible que tout aille bien, ce pendant que les conducteurs seront aveugles, et les capitaines lasches et ineptes? Aymons-nous mieux voir perir le navire, auquel nous sommes, que d'oster le gouvernail d'iceluy à ceux qui ne le peuvent conduire, et ne se veulent esveiller et esvertuer pour quelques tempestes et orages qui surviennent? Quel aveuglement et nonchalance de son salut est-ce là? Ne voulons nous donc jamais entendre à une necessaire reformation pour l'honneur de Dieu, pour nostre salut et bien public, ne baillant ou ostant le gouvernal de l'Eglise (vasselle de Jesus Christ) à ceux qui ne scavroient s'y porter ainsi qu'il fault, sans plus nous diviser, hayr et poursuyvre intestinement et malheureusement? Nous voyons que le reussissement de nos divisions et debats est tousjours contre nous-mesmes, et nous expose pour proye facile à nos ennemis estrangers, et toutesfois nous aymons mieux perir à veuë d'oeil, et mourir pernicieusement, que remedier sans coup ferir aux troubles presens, envoyants faire penitence le reste de leur vie ceux qui, contre tout droict, ont comme ravy et envahy les dignitez Ecclesiastiques, qui est une des causes des maledictions presentes.' René Benoist, *Traicté du saint jeusne de caresme: ou il est monstré iceluy estre de l'institution de Jesus Christ, et commandement de Dieu. Avec la troisieme epistre à Jean Calvin, Besze et tous autres partizans de sa secte, en laquelle de poinct en poinct, et presque de mot à mot, est respondu à ce qu'il a escrit en son institution (laquelle faulsement il dict chrestienne) contre le jeusne, discretion des viandes, et abstinence du caresme* (Paris: Chaudière, 1566), fols 36^v-37^r. Benoist's attitude to the clergy will be discussed later.

⁶⁰ Pasquier, p. 379.

⁶¹ Pasquier, pp. 379-80.

Conclusion

To conclude briefly, Benoist's prose style is of differing quality. In general, it displays many of the characteristics shown in examples of writing from the earlier part of his career, although not usually Calvin's. By the end of the sixteenth century, literary tastes had moved on, but Benoist's writing had not; his style was already formed at this point. It is evident that the grounds for the dismissal of Benoist's style by those such as Du Perron were due to changes in literary taste. If historians subscribe to these dismissals, they should understand fully the reasons underlying such criticism; moreover, they should be careful to separate considerations of style from those of tone and content.

2

Benoist's approach as a writer

a) Motivations

Let us now turn to Benoist's approach to writing and, to commence, his motivations for writing; here we shall begin to touch on the aim and content of his work. Benoist had very definite reasons for taking up his pen. Simply put, he felt that it was his duty as a theologian, and this was a duty that he took seriously throughout his career:

En l'autre charge de Docteur, j'ay parlé en la Chaize de verité et sans reproche j'ay mis la main a la plume et continué d'ecrire et publier livres et livrets depuis cinquante ans ou environ, qui ne m'ont cousté gueres de travail a les faire eclorre de ma forge.⁶²

For Benoist, it was one of the main duties of a theologian ('il appartient d'enseigner la parole de Dieu, lisant, preschant et escrivant').⁶³ This writing

should thus be connected with the dissemination of God's word. This may seem to be stating the obvious, but several points mark out Benoist as unusual in the Catholic Church, especially when taking into account the period under consideration: the enormous quantity of publications (the enthusiasm and zeal seem remarkable); Benoist's insistence on the dissemination of God's word; and the use of the vernacular for both of these projects from the 1550s. Benoist's approach was not one subscribed to by all Catholic theologians of the time. In particular, his belief in putting God's word into French caused severe difficulties for him from 1566 onwards after his publication of a French Bible. By this point, such actions were seen as belonging to the Protestant sphere of activity, although they equally had roots in evangelical, pre-Reformation currents.

Benoist's writing explores more than merely the duties of a theologian. He frequently discusses the role of the ecclesiastic and it is evident that he had a very high concept of priesthood.⁶⁴ He does not spare those who fail to live up to this ideal and is unafraid to level criticism at his own colleagues. Benoist points out the shortcomings of the clergy regularly; this is even located in polemic written directly against Protestants, Calvin in this case:

⁶² [sic]; René Benoist, *Declaration de feu nostre maistre messire René Benoit docteur en theologie curé de S. Eustache à Paris, sur la traduction des Bibles et annotations d'icelles. Ensemble la censure de nostre s. pere* (Paris: Du Pré, 1608), p. 5.

⁶³ René Benoist, *Notables resolutions des presens differens de la religion: prononcees par diverses predications, en plus de cinquante caresmes, preschez tant en ce royaume, que hors iceluy. Le tout dressé sur chacun jour de caresme*, 2 vols (Paris: Chevallier, 1608), I, 'Avant-propos', fol. ã2^r.

⁶⁴ 'Certainement la verité qui est forte, grande et divine demande, la lumiere et le plain champ, comme aussi le ministere d'icelle ne doit estre entrepris que par personnes excellentes et Heroiques qui congnoissent, apprehendent, representent et puissent monstrier constamment en eux-mesmes la Majesté divine, de laquelle ils sont Ambassadeurs vers ses creatures infirmes, pour la crainte desquelles ils ne doivent se taire ny dissimuler, ains estre hardis et courageux, parlant et proposant haut et clair avec toute prudence (*Ut verbum Dei currat sine offenculo dato* [adaptation of II Thessalonians 3. 1; see also Ephesians 6. 19 and Colossians 4. 3-4]) **ce qu'est de la verité et de l'honneur de Dieu eternel**, et pour l'edification de son Eglise, ne craignant que luy auquel plaisant et obeyssant, rien ne leur peut nuire ny leur advenir qui ne leur soit profitable selon l'escriture qui dict, que, *Bonis omnia cooperantur in bonum*, etc [Romans 8. 28].' René Benoist, *Troisiesme advertissement à la France, et principalement à la Cour, et à la grande ville de Paris, justement divinement punies* (Paris: La Noue, 1591), p. 99. My highlighting.

[...] jaçoit que par adventure quelque fois il s'y trouve quelques abus: mais, c'est la faute des pasteurs, endormis en avarice, ambition, et volupté, lesquels ne se soucient de prescher la parole de Dieu, et par icelle monstrent, l'usage et abus des images au simple peuple: comme aussi ne se evertuent d'exposer et donner à entendre aux doctes les lieux difficiles de l'escriture, et toutesfois Calvin, vous ne dites rien contre eux, les desirant (à mon advis) encores plus ignorans, negligents, et scandaleux, qu'ils ne sont, sachant bien que leur faute est le plus grand moyen que vous ayez, pour separer les hommes de l'obeissance de l'Eglise catholique, et profession de la religion ancienne et chrestienne.⁶⁵

The emphasis on God's word is again present. Benoist's belief in the Catholic Church is evident, too.

Thus, in his writing, Benoist frequently highlights clerical abuses, the suspect motivations of the clergy, and their negligence in spreading God's word. It is a theme dealt with at length in several texts.⁶⁶ Indeed, Benoist advocates 'une belle et tant necessaire reformation (laquelle ne demandent les heretiques, qui ne tendent qu'à ruine et confusion)'.⁶⁷ Benoist distinguishes himself from the Protestants; they are there only to cause trouble with no true desire to initiate reform. It appears that Benoist is seeking to reform, renew and revitalize the Catholic Church, a post-Tridentine position and a stance taken by Ronsard and those of Gallican sympathies who likewise criticised the Church; it is also a position that has resonance with the criticism of the clergy seen at the beginning of the century from those such as Erasmus.

⁶⁵ René Benoist, *Epistre à Jean Calvin, dit ministre de Geneve, pour luy remontrer qu'il repugne à la parole de Dieu, en ce qu'il a escrit des images des chrestiens. Avec un chrestien advertissement à luy mesme, de se reunir à l'Eglise catholique et romaine* (Paris: Chesneau, 1564), fols 61^r-v.

⁶⁶ A striking example of this is the long exposition berating the Catholic clergy found in Benoist's *Brieve response a quelque remonstrance faicte a la roine mere du Roy, par ceux qui se disent persecutez pour la parolle de Dieu. 1561. [...] A Messieurs les reverendissimes prelatz de France, assemblez à Poëssy pour la religion* (Paris: Guillard et Warencore, 1561): see the second part of this work (headed 'A Messeigneurs les reverendissimes prelatz de France [...]'), fols [ã5]^v-ẽ3^r. For a strongly-worded attack, see Benoist's *Exposition*: 'Mais je ne m'esmerveille point si plusieurs de noz Prestres sont paillars et putassiers, veu qu'ils passent tout leur temps en oysiveté, sommeil et passetemps: veu aussi qu'ils fondent en toutes delices et voluptez. Que s'ils s'adonnoient à faire le deu de leur vocation, pour la gloire de Dieu, pour l'edification de l'Eglise, et pour leur salut, prians, estudians, preschans, et souvent rememorans l'heure et le temps de leur mort: l'esprit de Dieu amortiroit facilement en eux l'ardeur et l'esguillon de la chair. [...] Que si les gens d'Eglise ne se corrigent de leur dissolution, je ne vois nul moyen d'esperer le repos publique.' *Exposition*, fol. 21^r; my highlighting.

⁶⁷ Benoist, *Traicté du saint jeusne de caresme*, fol. 36^r.

b) Aims

The aims of Benoist's writing are no less evident, both from the nature of his work, and, as we shall see, his own statements. His overall mission seems to be to strengthen the Catholic Church – the 'true' church – for this will directly benefit all Christians; this implies combatting heresy (hence the polemic) and ensuring that those within the Catholic Church remain there, and are able to conduct themselves in a Christian way (hence the devotional and didactic material). Above all else, as he indicates, his work should be clearly expressed, with the objective of profiting the masses; a variety of works have contributed to this:

Suffit qu'il s'exprime bien, c'est a quoy j'ay le plus visé, et de profiter aux simples ames Chrestienes, comme se peut voir en mon homelie de Noel Imprimee des l'an 1558. en la maniere de connoître Dieu, en mon trionfe de la foy, en la probation de l'Adoration de l'Hostie et autre de la manducation reelle publiees 1561. et 62. en mes traytés des images, de *Kareme*, des diximes, des usures, de l'Antechrist, des miracles, des Concile[s], de la Confession Sacramentayre, de la Messe, du Purgatoyre, des chandelles et Torches, de la Predication, des malefices et sortileges, outre ce que j'ay augmenté en la vie des Saintz en mes *Cathecheses*, instructions meditations, prieres, en mes discours de la coulpe peine et satisfation, qui sont tous petitiz traités asses familiers, et fort salutaires *elaborez* en peu d'années.⁶⁸

In his polemic, Benoist shows a strong and unflinching line as regards heretics, as can be seen by this statement addressed directly at them:

La doctrine ancienne est amplement fondee et prouuee par toutes manieres que l'on sçauroit demander une doctrine de religion estre confirmee. Au contraire, la vostre n'a pour toute confirmation que calomnies, detractions, murmures, blasphemes, injures de toutes sortes, ignorance, obstination, orgueil, presumption, violence, barbarie, cruauté excessive, avec aussi quelque meslange de pilleries, excès de charnalité desbordee, couvant un Libertinage et Atheisme, qui est la grande leçon des Apollyonistes de nostre temps.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Benoist, *Declaration*, pp. 5-6.

⁶⁹ *Advertissement exhortatoire à ceux de la parroisse de S. Eustache à Paris, lesquels ayans esté seduicts et trompez sous couleur et pretexte d'une Eglise reformee et plus pure religion, se sont retranchez de la profession de la foy et religion chrestienne, proposee en l'Eglise catholique, hors laquelle il n'y a point de salut* (Paris: Chesneau, 1569), 'Sommaires raisons fort apparentes et utiles, à ceux qui bien les gouteront et pourront digerer, lesquelles monstrent qu'il ne fault laisser la Religion ancienne, ny la profession d'icelle, pour les nouvelles opinions', 'Cinquiesme raison', fol. B6^r. In the same work, Benoist indicates that he is prepared to go beyond merely writing to deal with heretics, although the written word is clearly an important weapon in his armoury: 'En quoy, supportant vostre infirmité et imbecillité, je vous offre de vous monstrier que vous estes en erreur, soit par escritures où conferences, ou par quelconques manieres que voyez vous estre plus

He never lost sight of this, even at the end of his life.⁷⁰ Benoist, with these sentiments, is undeniably a ‘good’ Catholic and no *Politique*. However, he claims not to want Calvin’s death:⁷¹ perhaps this is what all Christians should profess, but surprisingly mild when compared to the violent and murderous outbursts of Benoist’s colleagues. In fact, Benoist is prepared to express a remarkable degree of appreciation for Calvin’s eloquence which he would like to see employed in fulfilling part of his agenda of reforming the Catholic clergy:

Car je confesseray librement, que je loüe et admire vostre labour et industrie, de laquelle pleust à Dieu que eussiez usé pour la verité, comme avez fait pour erreur et mensonge.

Ah, Calvin! si vous eussiez employé vostre esprit subtil, et ceste admirable grace d’eloquence qui est en vos escrits, et a attiré infinies personnes à la suite de vostre perniciose doctrine, contre la negligence, ignorance et vie abominable de plusieurs pasteurs, taschant à les faire se reformer selon la parole de Dieu, vous sauvant et plusieurs autres, vous eussiez acquis un renom grand et immortel.⁷²

Benoist thus neatly attacks two ‘ills’ at the same time. To select this subject for Calvin’s eloquence is once again to give an extraordinary prominence to the need for reform.

Refuting the errors of Protestants, arming the Catholic masses with arguments against heretics and providing Catholics with the shields of devotional and didactic material would be of little use in Latin; turning to the vernacular is the

expedientes, afin que ne demouriez en cest estat dangereux et perilleux, auquel Satan vous a reduits: vous advertissant aussi, que ceux qui ne voudront se recognoistre et venir à raison, par ce tant doux et amiable advertissement, que je les rechargeray d’un second plus aspre, et puis (suivant l’ordre de correction enseigné par Jesus Christ, Matth. 18.) a la troisieme fois j’useray de rigueur telle que peult user en cest endroit [...]: qui est de vous declarer et specifier excommuniez publiquement et defendre à tous les Catholiques de non converser avec vous’, fols 11^v-12^r.

⁷⁰ 1608: ‘mon principal estude et labour est à present sonder et refuter [...] les impietez, impuretez, mensonges, heresies, erreurs, et blasphemes contre Dieu eternal, contre Jesus Christ, contre son Eglise et sainte religion Chrestienne et catholique, que Calvin grand seducteur et jappeur a mis par escrit en son livre plein des choses susdictes [...]’ Benoist, *Notables resolutions*, I, ‘Premier advertissement aux Lecteurs’, fol. ã5^r.

⁷¹ Benoist: ‘j’ayme la personne de laquelle je deteste et excrete l’erreur’. René Benoist, *Brieve et facile response aux objections d’une damoyselle, par lesquelles elle rejette la Sainte Messe, et ne la veult ouyr; ou il est monstré qu’elle doit estre dicte et celebrée en latin. Il a esté adjousté un brief traicté, contenant certaines raisons pour fortifier une autre damoyselle, assaillie et oppugnée en la foy par les heretiques* (Paris: Chaudière, 1565), fol. 3^v.

⁷² Benoist, *Epistre à Jean Calvin*, fols 74^{r-v}.

logical conclusion. As he comments in the preface to his Bible, just as French has been used for bad ends, so too have Latin, Greek and Hebrew.⁷³ French is not heretical in itself.⁷⁴ This seems to have been a novel concept at the time – Latin had previously been the language of theological discourse – and, as we established in Chapter 1, Benoist was perhaps the first of the Faculty's theologians to tackle Calvinist doctrines in the vernacular in a systematic fashion.⁷⁵

Benoist's material is shaped by the age in which he lived, predominantly the French Wars of Religion. He has a great desire to bring 'useful' works to light and to make them available for general consumption; these help to defend the Catholic Church and attack Protestantism. Ephemeral pamphlets and treatises thus formed much of Benoist's output, which became irrelevant in a different political climate. This is partly why his work has been overlooked. As Levesque acknowledges,

[...] il n'écrit pas pour écrire. S'il prend la plume, c'est pour répondre à telle ou telle objection présente des hérétiques [...] C'est pour fortifier la foi des fidèles sur les dogmes catholiques attaqués [...] ou les éclairer sur la pratique de leurs dévotions mal comprises ou tournées en dérision [...].⁷⁶

Benoist is not attempting to write literature for literature's sake. His works fulfil a purpose and, as Calendini underlines, respond to the needs of the times,

⁷³ Prefatory material to Benoist's 1566 and 1568 Bible, 'Advertissemens apologetiques', 'Second advissement'. (C373, B1566che, fol. †5^v; C399, B1568nyv, fol. †4^v.)

⁷⁴ Benoist explicitly makes the point about works in French and his desire to help the masses: 'J'ay pensé faire quelque chose pour le bien public, aydant et suyvant le desir de plusieurs, si j'estois aucunement moyen **qu'il fust traduit en nostre langue François, pour par ce moyen estre divulgué et communiqué pour plus grand proufit de la Chrestienté.**' *Discours en forme de dialogue, ou histoire tragique, en laquelle est nayvement depeinte et descrite la source, origine, cause et progres des troubles, partialitez et differens qui durent encores aujourd'huy, meuz par Luther, Calvin et leurs conjurez et partizans contre l'Eglise catholique. Traduit du latin de R. P. Guillaume Lindan evesque alleman, en nostre langue françoise par M. R. Benoist* (Paris: Chaudière, 1566), 'Advertissement au peuple françois, touchant trois poincts notables à l'endroit des doctrines nouvelles: sçavoir est, des autheurs et ministres d'icelles: des fruicts d'icelles mesmes: et, du temps auquel elles ont eu commencement', fols 10^v-11^r. My highlighting.

⁷⁵ Higman, 'Theology in French', p. 365.

⁷⁶ *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, II, col. 646.

something carried out when it involved heretics with ‘une ardeur jamais ralentie ni découragée’.⁷⁷

Whether Benoist’s output was phrased in an elegant manner was not the point. He comments at one stage:

Or si tu y prens instruction et contentement, rend en graces à Dieu, auteur de tout bien, et en sçais gré à maistre François Carreau, Docteur en Theologie, et à maistre Claude du Gué, personnages vertueux et sçavans, lesquels m’ont beaucoup aydé (qui estois occupé à choses plus serieuses et de consequence) en la divulgation d’iceluy livre, auquel aussi **ne cherche trop grande eloquence et parure de langage: par ce que nous Chrestiens sommes differens en cela d’avec les heretiques [...]**.⁷⁸

As the standard line goes, only heretics need to ‘beautify’ their language to seduce the masses. This may seem to conflict with the point made previously about Calvin, but it appears to me to be more indicative of the fact that whilst the theologian is appreciative of Calvin’s eloquence and the new styles of writing in general (the latter already witnessed in Chapter 1), he is equally capable of using an orthodox argument whenever convenient or advantageous to his case.

As demonstrated previously, Benoist formulates views on the presentation of the written word; most importantly, one should express oneself clearly. Eloquence is helpful, but not necessary:

Car estant venu presqu’aussi tard a saluer les bonnes lettres comme Caton les Grecques je n’ay pas esté nourry parmi le Jardin et fleurs de bien dire et ne m’en suis gueres soucié, pourveu que je me sois faict entendre par ce que d’un Theologien il ne faut pas refuser les ornemens de langaige s’il les aporte, mais il ne les faut trop exactement exiger de luy, s’il n’en a fait provision suffisante.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ *Dictionnaire d’histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques*, VII, col. 1378. Hugu labels Benoist ‘un controversiste infatigable’: ‘son oeuvre se compose d’un nombre incalculable de discours, de petits traités polémiques, d’opuscules de vulgarisation, de “tracts”. Sa vigilance toujours active guettait toutes les occasions d’intervenir dans les discussions théologiques.’ As evidence of the dynamism of Benoist and his publisher, Hugu observes that ‘l’Épître dédicatoire du *Premier tome des refutations* [the final work in response to Jean de L’Espine’s comments (PQ20)] est datée du “15 de février 1568” et l’achevé d’imprimer est du 18 du même mois.’ Hugu, *Jean de L’Espine*, p. 64, including n. 2.

⁷⁸ Benoist, *Discours en forme de dialogue*, ‘Advertissement’, fol. 11^r. My highlighting.

⁷⁹ Benoist, *Declaration*, p. 5.

This is more than modesty or a disclaimer; Benoist is aware that he can have no pretensions when it comes to the standard of his prose, especially at the period in which he makes this comment, the early seventeenth century. The orthodox argument of the priority of truth over elegance seen above can, however, be used in support of Benoist's work at whatever date.

c) Authorial methods and strategies

To conclude this review of Benoist's writing, we will look into three further issues: Benoist's use of Scripture and the Church Fathers, his 'recycling' of the work of heretics and the employment of paratext. All are notable features of his output and are used as important authorial or editorial tools.

i) Using Scripture and Church Fathers

Let us commence by looking at Benoist's use of Scripture and the Church Fathers. Pasquier finds Benoist's use of Scripture most worthy of praise, claiming that 'il sait placer au meilleur endroit les textes de l'Écriture, ou, quelquefois, mais rarement, d'auteurs profanes'.⁸⁰ Even from an early stage, Pasquier notes 'la connaissance étonnante que le jeune prédicateur avait de la Bible et les heureuses applications qu'il savait en faire'.⁸¹ He is particularly struck by one publication addressed to the pope, 'remarquable par l'abondance des passages de la sainte Écriture utilisés, plus de quatre-vingts en vingt pages'.⁸² Pasquier is certainly impressed by the amount of Scripture drawn upon by Benoist and the way he uses it, never making 'des accommodations forcées' or 'de bizarres applications'.⁸³

⁸⁰ Pasquier, p. 160.

⁸¹ *La Maniere de cognoistre salutairement Jesus Christ [...] (1561) (PQ8)*; Pasquier, p. 53.

⁸² *Plainte et requeste presentee a nostre tressainct, tresconstant, et tresvigilant pere le Pape Sixte I' [...] (1590) (PQ148)*. Pasquier, p. 208, n. 3.

Indeed, Benoist himself comments on his heavy dependence on Scripture in his preaching, at the cost of quoting from sources traditionally drawn on by Catholic theologians such as the Church Fathers. He stresses that this was the pragmatic way of operating; it was appropriate for the times and audience:

Deux choses ont esté raportées à Rome, l'une de moy, l'autre de ladite version.⁸⁴ De moy qu'en mes predications **je ne cotys que les textes de l'écriture sainte**, sans coter les passages, autoritez et interpretations des Docteurs et saintz Peres de l'Eglise, ce qu'on dit estre necessaire, afin que la predication aye plus de pois, comme ne provenant de la bouche, où intention du Predicateur, ains du Sens reçu en l'Eglise. **A quoy j'eusse peu répondre, que je me suis accomodé a ce siecle, et a mon auditoire.** D'autant que la plus part de ceux qui frequentent les Sermons, ne veulent plus rendre leur creance entiere sinon a la Bible. Notamment ceux qui ont eu quelque vent de nos nouveaux dogmatiseurs, lesquelz je me suis efforcé persuader ou vaincre disputant contre eux, avec armes propres et comme ont dit en l'école aux argumentz *ad hominem*. *Factus sum Judais Judeus, ut Judeos lucri facerem.*⁸⁵ Mon intention n'a esté que syncere de m'accommoder a ceux que je vouloy gagner.⁸⁶

Thus we see his determination to retain followers of the Catholic Church and a sensitivity to and understanding of what they will respond to. Benoist's method might make him 'suspect' in that he uses a more 'Protestant' approach to preaching; however, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the enthusiastic use of Scripture was a strategy advocated by evangelicals and humanists.

Benoist himself highlights and defends the use of this strategy in particular circumstances. He distinguishes between three types of audience he is addressing: heretics, atheists and those already within the Catholic Church; arms must be appropriate to the target. As he explains, only for the last group is it appropriate to use Church Fathers:

La prudence de la guerre gist en la recognoissance de son ennemy, et au chois et munition ou appareil des armes propres pour le combatre et vaincre. Or j'ay entrepris (me confiant en la bonté et ayde de Dieu tout-puissant, comme fist David contre Goliath) contre l'Heretique lequel rejette l'Eglise, et approuve l'Ecriture S. C'est pourquoy j'ay consideré, que ce me seroit faire une chose de neant et inutile, de luy opposer les Docteurs anciens, desquels il se mocque: estant necessaire de le battre et assaillir par l'Ecriture, comme l'Atheiste, lequel se mocque et de l'Eglise et de l'Ecriture sainte, par raisons sensibles,

⁸³ Pasquier, p. 183.

⁸⁴ Benoist is referring to his French Bible.

⁸⁵ I Corinthians 9. 19-20.

⁸⁶ *Declaration*, pp. 28-29. My highlighting.

apparentes et evidentes. Mais les Docteurs anciens, qui ont mené une vie sainte, sont alleguez utilement contre les Catholiques pecheurs ou desja chancelans, pour les retenir ou amener à une vraye penitence et sainte vie. Or icy mon principal propos est par la grace de Dieu, combatre utilement l'Atheiste et l'Heretique.⁸⁷

However, it seems that quoting frequently from Church Fathers should be restricted yet further. In many cases it is useless or superfluous for the audience, and for the benefit of the pastor:

J'adjouste, que les frequentes cottations, encores qu'elles aydent les mediocres, sont inutiles aux idiots et superflues aux sçavans faisant souvent plus pour l'ostentation du Docteur, que pour l'edification de l'auditeur ou lecteur.⁸⁸ Je dis donc, que la raison, que l'Ecriture sainte prinse au sens de l'Eglise, et la determination du S. Esprit en icelle Eglise Catholique, sont les seurs fondemens de toute salutare doctrine: tout ce qui y repugne, estant à rejeter, reprouver et condamner, et tout ce qui y est conforme, doivant estre receu et suivy, encores que aucun ancien Docteur n'y auroit jamais pensé, estant trop infirme et miserable ne dependre que d'autrui. Ce seroit oster et suffoquer la generosité des bons esprits: et faire contre l'Ecriture, laquelle dit du fidele Docteur: *quod fluent flumina de ventre eius*.⁸⁹

Benoist certainly wants to adhere to Scripture only as interpreted by the Catholic Church, but his preference for Scripture over the Church Fathers appears to run much more deeply than a consideration of what the audience will respond to; it is a preoccupation with Benoist. In addition to this, he seems prepared to go a long way in asserting the right of the modern theologian to make new interpretations; no doubt this sort of attitude provoked the questions as to his orthodoxy discussed in Chapter 1. Twinned with Benoist's powerful criticism of the Catholic clergy, it is clear to see why doubts might have been raised.

Benoist also suggests that there has been an evolution in his work: in the past he used to depend on Church Fathers to a greater extent.⁹⁰ However, there comes a

⁸⁷ Benoist, *Notables resolutions*, I, 'Cinquiesme advertissement, auquel est donné raison du style suyvy au present livre', fol. ã7^v.

⁸⁸ Taylor notes that Benoist understood that 'the mark of an excellent preacher was his ability to accommodate himself to the capacity of his listeners'; he makes this point in a text written as early as 1563. Taylor, *Heresy and Orthodoxy*, p. 3.

⁸⁹ John 7. 38. *Notables resolutions*, I, 'Quatresme advertissement où il est déclaré, pourquoy nous contentant d'une ferme, solide et claire raison de l'Ecriture sainte, et de l'auctorité de l'Eglise Catholique, Apostolique et Romaine, nous n'insérons formellement en quelques uns de nos escrits les opinions des Docteurs, s'il n'en est de besoin', fols ã7^{r-v}.

⁹⁰ 'Il a esté quelque temps que nous n'osions cheminer tous seuls, observant les circonstances de nostre temps et aage, n'osants ouvrir la bouche en chaire, ny prendre la plume en main en

time when some independence of thought is desirable,⁹¹ and, for Benoist, when one can break away from the restricting use of the Church Fathers:

Mais je vous demande, si un soldat de bon coeur ne tasche pas à estre Capitaine? Quand il est tel, il faut qu'il commande: car autrement il le faudroit renvoyer avec les soldats. Juvenal disoit: *semper ego auditor tantum? nunquam ne reponam?*⁹² S. Paul disoit Vous devriez estre desja maistres pour le temps, etc.⁹³ Si les premiers et tant estimez à bon droit Docteurs anciens eussent tenu ceste reigle, ils n'eussent gueres dit ny escrit. Ils ont suivy les principes et les fondements de tous bien-naiz, et fournis d'un bon jugement, qui sont la raison, la parole de Dieu, et la determination de l'Eglise. Mais je vous demande, s'il n'y avoit point eu de Docteurs anciennement, si nous ne dirions et n'escririons rien? Outre, tout ce qu'ils ont dit et escrit pour leur temps, est-il bon et propre pour le nostre? Or nous vouloir ainsi astreindre, est nous faire devenir escoliers, et oster l'autorité, le jugement, et la puissance de Docteur. Je louë et admire les anciens Docteurs, mes bons maistres et venerables peres. Je louë et approuve pareillement le labour de ceux de ce temps, lesquels preschent et escrivent par rapsodies et allegations propres au propos et sans confusion. Mais aussi je leur prefere justement ceux, lesquels y usent de discours de doctrine: *omnia in seipsis habentes posita*,⁹⁴ disant avec S. Paul: *aemulamini meliora charismata*.⁹⁵

As we can see from the above comments, Benoist's argumentation is based on reason and practice. The emphasis falls on doing what is appropriate for his age; Church Fathers are not always relevant, but Scripture is. Again, he reasserts the

l'estude, ny lire és escholes (où graces à Dieu nous avons assez faict d'actes de probation et approbation) des Universitez, sans incontinent nous targuer, gabionner et fortifier de l'autorité de S. Augustin, de S. Hierosme, de S. Ambroise, de S. Gregoire, de S. Chrysostome, de S. Cyprian, de S. Hilaire, de S. Thomas, Durant, Lescot, S. Bonaventure, et semblables excellents Docteurs Chrestiens et Catholiques, grands Capitaines et insignes Chevaliers de l'ordre du S. Esprit et de l'Eglise Catholique: ce que verront clairement ceux qui voudront lire nos escrits de ce temps là, comme est le Traicté de la reale manducation du corps de Jesus-Christ en l'hostie sacree: celui Des Images contre Calvin: celui Du Jeusne de Caresme: celui De l'adoration de l'hostie sacree: celui Du sacrifice Evangelique: celui Des dismes: et celui de la maniere de cognoistre salutairement Jesus Christ (auquel toutesfois je commençois à marcher tout seul quelquefois): et plusieurs autres.' Benoist, *Notables resolutions*, I, 'Quatriesme advertissement', fol. ã6^v.

⁹¹ 'Comme il est miserable de n'avoir table que celle d'autrui, ainsi aussi d'estre lié et assubjecty aux escrits, aux opinions et au dire des autres, tellement que l'on ne puisse apporter son symbole et sa petite portion au banquet. Ce qu'a enseigné S. Hierosme, quand il a escrit de la composition du tabernacle, et un brave esprit en son noble naturel a escrit: *Nullius sum addictus jurare in verba magistri* [Horace, *Epistles* I. 1. 14; sometimes discussed in conjunction with I Corinthians 7. 23]. Et un autre tresgrand en nature et en la foy a escrit: C'est moy, et non le Seigneur qui dit celà. Or je ne dis pas celà, voulant suivre le vol hautain et admirable de ces aigles là, sçachant bien (grace à Dieu) *quam sit mihi domi curta suppellex* [Persius, *Satires* 4. 52]. mais pour secouër ce joug des initians, et rompre le cordon des enfans qui commencent à cheminer (*quum iam debeamus sapere patruos, et nucibus facere quaecunque relictis* [adaptation of Persius, *Satires* 1. 10-11]) ausquels l'on bandelette le front, et les meine l'on par la ceinture, de peur qu'ils ne tombent, et en tombant se blessent.' Benoist, *Notables resolutions*, I, 'Quatriesme advertissement', fol. ã6^r-^v.

⁹² Juvenal, *Satires* I. 1. 1.

⁹³ Hebrews 5. 12.

⁹⁴ I have not as yet been able to locate this.

⁹⁵ I Corinthians 12. 31. *Notables resolutions*, 'Quatriesme advertissement', fols ã6^v-ã7^r.

individualist's case and displays sentiment which could have triggered doubts over his orthodoxy. The publication from which this quotation derives appeared in 1608, the year of Benoist's death, when he perhaps felt he had nothing to lose; both texts quoted in this section were published in this year, and their frankness, self-explanatory and self-justificatory nature are no doubt in part due to this. It is possible that these works put in writing opinions which Benoist had previously voiced or at least his contemporaries suspected through his use of Scripture in print and from the pulpit; these suspicions led to accusations of the theologian's 'suspect' behaviour.

ii) 'Recycling' the work of heretics

As we saw in Chapter 1, Benoist's willingness to 'purify' Protestant works has been called both original and remarkable by Higman.⁹⁶ Benoist believed that it was perfectly legitimate to use the work of heretics, as long as it had been purged:

Quant est de ceux qui pourront trouver mauvais, qu'en cest ouvrage se trouvent plusieurs choses, soit en la version, ou es annotations, lesquelles sont pareillement leües es Bibles des heretiques, je les prie de considerer, que comme ne se trouvent au monde choses tant semblables et accordantes, esquelles on ne trouve quelque diversité, aussi il n'y en a qui soyent tant contraires et differentes, qu'elles n'accordent en quelque poinct. Donc les heretiques ne peuvent estre si grans menteurs, qu'ilz ne disent aucunefois quelque verité. Pourquoy nous Catholiques, qui aimons et ambrassons toute verité, comme procedante du saint Esprit, et estant le fondement de nostre doctrine et religion, nous ne la rejectons, ny decognoissons pour avoir esté asservie, desguisee et souillee par les heretiques: ains nous la delivrons, nettoions et repetons d'eux comme d'iniques usurpateurs. [...] Puisque la guerre spirituelle est ouverte entre nous et les heretiques, ne m'est il pas permis de les piller?⁹⁷

This kind of sentiment would have undoubtedly shocked many of Benoist's colleagues; heretical works would have been considered inherently tarnished in many quarters. Higman, however, sees Benoist's great originality and merit as

⁹⁶ Higman, 'Advertissemens', p. 570.

⁹⁷ Prefatory material to Benoist's 1566 and 1568 Bible: see C399, B1568nyv, *Advertissemens apologetiques*, 'Cinquiesme advisement', fol. †5^r. See also pp. 8-9 of the *Declaration*: he had hoped 'qu'apres y avoir corrigé ce qui se trouveroit de mauvais, telles Bibles en ce beau langage pourroient proffiter, comme nous voyons que l'Anguille sert de bon aliment, quand un bon cuisinier, luy a arraché le nombril et autres parties venimeuses'.

acting in this manner and accepting a dialogue with Protestants.⁹⁸ As we noted in the previous chapter, the consequences of this were far-reaching for both sides: ‘C’est au moment où l’Église catholique romaine commence à *discuter* avec l’hérésie que la Contre-Réforme prend de la consistance.’⁹⁹ Benoist’s approach to writing is therefore of paramount importance if in acting in this way he paved the way for a robust Counter-Reformation; the Protestants eventually went on to lose the battle in France.

iii) The employment of paratext

The last point for consideration under the heading of methods and strategies concerns Benoist’s use of paratext. Let us first establish what is meant by this term. By paratext, I understand those elements defined as such by Gérard Genette, summarised here by Richard Macksey:

Paratextuality: [...] those liminal devices and conventions, both within the book (*peritext*) and outside it (*epitext*), that mediate the book to the reader: titles and subtitles, pseudonyms, forewords, dedications, epigraphs, prefaces, intertitles, notes, epilogues, and afterwords – all those framing elements [...]; but also the elements in the public and private history of the book, its ‘epitext’ [...]: ‘public epitexts’ (from the author or publisher) as well as ‘private epitexts’ (authorial correspondence, oral confidences, diaries, and pretexts).¹⁰⁰

The list is not, of course, exhaustive (for example, Macksey omits illustrations), nor are all the items included in Genette’s work relevant to our discussions (for

⁹⁸ Higman, ‘*Advertissemens*’, p. 571.

⁹⁹ Higman, ‘Luther, Calvin et les docteurs’, in *Lire et découvrir*, pp. 305-20 (p. 320). From his study of Catholic polemic, Racaut concludes that his work ‘reflects two communities talking past each other: there is evidence of cross-fertilization between the two discourses but there is no real dialogue’. Racaut, *Hatred in Print* (2002), p. 132. Higman and Racaut thus ostensibly disagree about whether there was dialogue or not between the two Churches. However, the two commentators appear to interpret ‘dialogue’ in a different way; Higman seems to use the term in a broader sense, to signify that the Catholic Church had taken heed of the manoeuvrings of the Protestants and formed a response, no matter how adversarial in nature.

¹⁰⁰ Richard Macksey’s foreword in Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. by Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. xviii. For Genette on the paratextual equation (‘paratext = peritext + epitext’) and his introduction to the concepts, pp. 4-5; for a more detailed discussion of what constitutes public epitext, pp. 344-70, and private epitext, pp. 371-403.

instance, the ‘please-insert’, now known as jacket copy,¹⁰¹ was something alien to sixteenth-century publications). However, Genette’s theory in this area can be applied to some of the paratextual issues of concern to us. Many of the findings included in Chapters 3 and 4 stem from a study of certain paratextual elements surrounding Benoist’s vernacular Bible and a translation of that devotional work so popular in the late medieval period, the Book of Hours, as well as of editions of the same texts published by others; the paratext to some extent becomes the central focus. My intention in this chapter is to introduce the concept briefly, as it is an important part of Benoist’s approach to writing; more refined conclusions on Benoist’s paratextual choices will be drawn in subsequent chapters.¹⁰²

Benoist’s publications can be divided into two categories, whether written in Latin or the vernacular: firstly, those works composed by Benoist, often treatises, and in which the polemical and devotional frequently overlap; secondly, Benoist’s editions of works where the main text or texts were at least originally written by others. The second grouping includes his translations and volumes in which his involvement is that of editor or annotator, or for which he provides prefatory material; this category covers relatively modern works (François Le Picart’s or Willem van der Lindt’s, for example) and various types of long-established text (Scripture, Church Fathers, the Book of Hours, or the *Grand Ordinaire*, for instance).

It is relatively easy to locate paratext provided by Benoist in his works, no matter what type of book or the year of publication. As can be seen by looking at the source of the quotations used in this chapter, Benoist added a significant amount of prefatory material (a type of peritext, if we follow Genette’s terminology) to his publications; this was often in the form of the *advertissement* or dedicatory epistle, and sometimes contained polemic. Indeed, the reader can meet with a striking juxtaposition of the polemical and devotional as a direct consequence of

¹⁰¹ Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 104-16.

the addition of paratext, as occurs in Benoist's Bibles and his first Book of Hours. The contents of this prefatory material, as will be seen in later chapters, demonstrate explicitly his commitment to publish certain texts. If we analyse the epitext in terms of the debate and response from Benoist and other interested parties concerning the theologian's vernacular translation of the Bible and the Book of Hours, it confirms his determination. It shows Benoist's consistent and persistent combative use of the written word to achieve his objectives. Research will, in fact, go beyond the paratext of Benoist's work, in that peritext and epitext surrounding translations other than Benoist's will be explored for contextualisation.

Additionally, the physical layout of editions of Benoist's Bible and Book of Hours is revealing. The presentation and format (typeface, illustrations and other decoration, headings, tables, indices and so forth (again, peritext)) when compared to those of forerunners, market rivals, and subsequent editions, show by which trends and examples the person responsible for this paratext was influenced, as well as the impact on subsequent works. Here, we are presented with the difficulty that Benoist would not have been the only party responsible for the paratext to his publications; his publisher and printer were presumably involved in the decisions surrounding several of the presentational aspects (typeface and decoration, for instance).¹⁰³ Benoist's relatively unadorned 1569 Book of Hours (his earliest Hours) shows a break from the style of earlier editions which had an abundance of woodcut borders and illustrations; I shall later consider whether this was under Benoist's impetus to 'clean up' and modernise 'good' traditional works (and thus a strategic part of Benoist's publishing programme), or rather the printer's initiative. If this were Benoist's choice, it would be suggestive that he perhaps took a dim view of some features that had appeared in earlier Hours, whilst the act of publishing this translation of a late medieval work of piety would illustrate his belief in the worth of such

¹⁰² Some of the conclusions here anticipate later work; unsubstantiated claims made in this section will be justified at a later point.

devotional aids for the laity. Changes under Benoist's guidance would indicate the extent to which he was committed to a programme heralding spiritual renewal.

Paratextual features often serve multiple ends; for example, prefatory material provides an opportunity for defence, attack and guiding the reading of the book. Benoist makes full use of the chance to introduce and manoeuvre the reader through the text in the way he believes appropriate; in his Bible, Benoist does this both through prefatory material and marginal notes, the latter of which also attack Protestant practices at times. Genette appreciates fully the use and power of paratext; he describes it as 'functional', 'ensur[ing] for the text a destiny consistent with the author's purpose',¹⁰⁴ 'provid[ing] a kind of canal lock between the ideal and relatively immutable identity of the text and the empirical (sociohistorical) reality of the text's public [...], the lock permitting the two to remain "level"'.¹⁰⁵ Importantly, Genette recognises the influence and manipulation which may be exerted through the paratext to the author's advantage; he believes we are best served if fully aware of this, whether intending to accept or reject it.¹⁰⁶ However sincerely Benoist wished to instruct the laity in the true religion, he consistently attempts to persuade and direct his reader through multiple paratextual strategies; indeed, as a *curé* and theologian, it was his duty and right to do so. Heavy paratextual usage is a feature throughout his oeuvre, regardless of date and type of publication (although admittedly there are sometimes mundane reasons for some paratextual presence, such as convention). Of course, the practice of supplying additional material was by no means unique to Benoist.

¹⁰³ On authorial and publisher's paratext, Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 8-9.

¹⁰⁴ Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 407.

¹⁰⁵ Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 408.

¹⁰⁶ Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 409.

As Genette's conclusions intimate, to overcome any paratextual manipulation the reasons for paratextual usage must be perceived.¹⁰⁷ We must be able to locate the paratext and understand why it has been placed there. As Genette rightly suggests, to contradict a viewpoint, it must first be assimilated.¹⁰⁸ It is however uncertain that the average sixteenth-century layman was always in a position to distinguish between text and paratext and so able to resist this influence, especially, for example, in an overloaded Bible. In the earlier stages of printing – and particularly in view of the fact that Scriptural and quasi-liturgical texts are under consideration in this thesis – the boundaries between paratext and text were more permeable; the paratext sometimes became integrated into the text (for example, as seen in the earliest printed French-language Bibles). This can only serve to increase the influence of the person responsible for paratext, in our case, Benoist.

The fact that there exists a large amount of paratext to many of Benoist's publications (and supplied at the instigation of the theologian himself) is indicative of his enthusiasm for the opportunities that this type of supplementary material afforded him. Benoist evidently appreciated it as a vehicle through which one could freely defend, attack, guide and persuade. Prefatory material is also an important authorial tool in that it can provide a space in which the author or editor may go beyond what is expected from the publication's title; it gives an opportunity to voice one's opinions on a range of issues related (or even unrelated) to the publication, something which Benoist did not often spurn, as we shall see.

* * *

¹⁰⁷ Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 404-10 (pp. 408-09).

¹⁰⁸ Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 408-09.

Conclusion

To conclude, in terms of the French language, Benoist's work is interesting in that it is written in French at an early stage of Catholic response to the Reformation movements. All such works played a part in the evolution of the language so that it could be used as a medium for theological argument. Higman argues that the French Reformers – and those in Geneva in particular – had a great impact on the French language in terms of introducing 'for the first time, an appeal to lay public opinion in a matter of intellectual debate'¹⁰⁹ and effecting the swift evolution of several linguistic qualities which enabled the lucid treatment of abstract argumentation.¹¹⁰ We should not underestimate the importance of those who followed these initial trends and saw to it that they were firmly established and accepted on the Catholic side of the division.¹¹¹ Benoist contributed, to a greater or lesser extent, in developing what Higman terms 'the intellectual, argumentative language forged in the Reformation battle'.¹¹² Younger Catholic writers such as Du Perron achieved a clearer and more elegant style when writing in the vernacular, but the foundations were laid by earlier authors, amongst whom was Benoist.¹¹³ He could not write with the eloquence of Calvin, but he was superior to predecessors such as Pierre Doré and Artus Désiré.¹¹⁴ Doré's style has been characterised as 'highly florid and metaphor-filled';¹¹⁵ from the examples of Benoist's prose given in this chapter, it is clear that Benoist's style is more accessible and suited to theological discourse than this. Moreover, if

¹⁰⁹ Higman, 'Reformation and the French Language', pp. 337-51 (p. 349).

¹¹⁰ Higman, 'Reformation and the French Language', pp. 349, 351.

¹¹¹ Higman goes some way to acknowledging this – at least implicitly – although he emphasises the importance of Calvin and the Reformation movement. Francis M. Higman, *Piety and the People: Religious Printing in French 1511-1551* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996), pp. 24-30 (p. 29).

¹¹² Higman, 'Reformation and the French Language', p. 350. Pasquier notes Benoist's contribution to the development of the French language. Pasquier, p. 125.

¹¹³ Higman underlines the influence of Calvin on Du Perron ('Theology in French', pp. 366-69), but it seems reasonable to suggest that Du Perron would have read the work of other authors, especially that of important Counter-Reformation polemicists.

¹¹⁴ The main work on Artus Désiré remains Frank S. Giese, *Artus Désiré: Priest and Pamphleteer of the Sixteenth Century* (Chapel Hill: U. N. C. Department of Romance Languages, 1973).

¹¹⁵ Higman, *Piety and the People*, p. 6. Higman surmises that this style was 'more appreciated by contemporaries than it is today'.

commentators suggest his work matched the violence and lack of sophistication of *Désiré*, they are referring to specific works written when Benoist's position was precarious; they also seem to merge criticisms of language, tone and content without always considering the reasons behind disparaging comments, which are sometimes related to fluctuating cultural tastes.

Benoist's work of all types was successful, but not always sophisticated; he was writing for the needs of the times, for the masses and not for an elite.¹¹⁶ Devotional works were needed, but these too were 'tous des écrits de circonstance' tailored for the masses.¹¹⁷ Pasquier argues that the abandonment of scholastic argument was necessary for Benoist's market; indeed, that this ensured his success.¹¹⁸ Benoist's understanding of what the masses required and ability to deliver this were two of his greatest strengths; the popularity of his work shows that he was responding to a pre-existing need and a gap in this market. In the following chapters, an examination of text and paratext will demonstrate the sometimes haphazard method of assembly behind Benoist's publications; he acted with expediency, as an enabler, facilitating the rapid production of texts.

Benoist's approach to writing gives some indication of an agenda – in some aspects Erasmian and Gallican – involving the renewal and revitalisation of the Catholic Church; his barbed comments concerning the abuses of the clergy recur frequently in his earliest publications through to those published near his death. Coupled with his interest in the wide dissemination of God's word, this seems to echo humanist and evangelical currents seen at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The combination of several elements that we have seen above – Benoist's energetic publishing activities, belief in the spread of God's word, pillaging of Protestant scholarship and expression of this in the vernacular – were, of course, enthusiasms which led to one of Benoist's most controversial projects: the publication of a French Bible. This will be the focus of the next chapter; the

¹¹⁶ Pasquier, p. 312.

¹¹⁷ Pasquier, p. 312.

final chapter will then illustrate that Benoist's interest extended to other pre-Reformation movements, by considering his reintroduction of several traditional devotional texts in the vernacular.

Neglecting to research French Catholic literature of this period in favour of Protestant writings, simply because it has been viewed more interesting to study the heterodox, has led many to overlook the significance of the Catholic contribution and has delayed the discovery of the subtleties involved in the positions taken by figures such as Benoist. As we have seen in this chapter, Benoist's position on matters such as Scriptural interpretation is not what we might have supposed of a Catholic theologian of the sixteenth century. As work by those such as Thierry Wanegffelen has begun to demonstrate, the Reformation landscape is not as we once believed.

¹¹⁸ Pasquier, p. 312.

CHAPTER 3

Benoist and the French-language Bible

Interest in René Benoist over the last few decades has concentrated principally on the events surrounding the publication of his French Bible in the 1560s. Benoist's part in the evolution of sixteenth-century French-language Bibles has been widely acknowledged and the circumstances relating to the controversy well researched.¹ As such, after summarising the situation as regards French Bibles up to the 1560s and providing a brief description of the main aspects to the Benoist Bible affair, this chapter will focus on less well-worked areas of research concerning Benoist and the dissemination of Scriptural translations, an area of great importance to Benoist's programme for the vernacular instruction of the laity.

After establishing the status of the French Bible at the time when Benoist published his first French Bible, this chapter divides into the two areas which form paratext as discussed in Chapter 2: firstly, peritext ('liminal devices and conventions [...] within the book') and secondly, epitext ('elements in the public and private history of the book').² In the first section, a comparison of certain peritextual elements found in Benoist's Bibles will be drawn with those in other early-printed French Bibles, above all in the sphere of prefatory material and the arguments and concerns located there; this demonstrates the extent to which his

¹ Pasquier, *Un curé de Paris*, pp. 85-116; Baumgarten, *René Benoist und seine französische Bibel von 1566*; De Clercq, 'La Bible française de René Benoist'; Black, 'The Transition to the Seventeenth Century', under 'The Printed Bible', in *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, III, 447-49; Paul Heinz Vogel, 'Problematische Zuschreibungen von französischen Bibeldrucken des 16. Jahrhunderts', *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* (1965), 165-68; Chambers, *Bibliography of French Bibles: Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century French-Language Editions of the Scriptures*, pp. xiv-xv, 364-69, 389-94; *Le Temps des Réformes et la Bible*, ed. by Guy Bedouelle and Bernard Roussel (Paris: Beauchesne, 1989), pp. 263, 280-82, 535; Chédozeau, *La Bible et la liturgie en français*, pp. 110-14; *Les Bibles en français: Histoire illustrée du Moyen Age à nos jours*, ed. by Pierre-Maurice Bogaert (Turnhout: Brepols, 1991), pp. 91-102; Baddeley, *L'Orthographe française au temps de la Réforme*, pp. 297-98; Higman, 'Advertissemens', in *Lire et découvrir*, pp. 563-71.

² Richard Macksey, in a foreword to Genette's *Paratexts*, p. xviii.

polemic and observations echo or differ from those of others – including evangelicals and Protestants – involved in producing vernacular Bibles. Furthermore, through the examination of the presentational aspects of Bibles, I have located the models for printing to which Benoist – or his printer or publisher – turned when compiling his first French Bible; this has implications when considering the nature of Benoist’s working methods as a writer (or more specifically here, translator or editor). In the second section, an analysis of the epitext connected to Benoist’s Bible project is provided, namely material written by Benoist before and after the appearance of his Bibles related or relating to Scriptural translations. Previously, a few works directly related to the affair have been discussed; the aim of this study will be to broaden the debate by examining a greater variety of texts. This chapter’s findings thus further refine our understanding of Benoist’s beliefs about circulating Scripture to the laity in the vernacular, an essential part of Benoist’s project to instruct the Catholic masses, which, once again, recalls the work of those in pre-Reformation movements. Humanists and evangelicals were, of course, eager to promote Scripture in this form.

1

Context

a) The status of French-language Bibles in the 1560s

Let us firstly establish the position of the French-language Bible at the time of the appearance of Benoist’s French Bible in 1566.³ By the 1560s, Protestant scholars

³ For a summary of the history of the sixteenth-century French Bible, see Chambers, pp. xi-xv; for a more comprehensive survey of sixteenth-century French Bibles up to 1566, see Bogaert, pp. 48-91. In this chapter, I provide references primarily to Chambers and Bogaert for discussions relating to the French Bible. However, for a more descriptive account of events, I refer to Bogaert, whilst once considerations become more technical and precise (for instance, under the section on peritext), I refer principally to Chambers’ bibliography. Relevant material can frequently be found in several other sources (see note 1; the editions indicated are amply indexed).

in Geneva had succeeded in producing a good vernacular translation of the Bible in French.⁴ The Protestant Church argued that the layman needed to have a version of God's word in his own tongue and believed that this should be a version derived from the original Hebrew and Greek texts and not from St Jerome's Latin Vulgate, the text traditionally used by the Catholic Church, with its perceived and sometimes actual translation errors and inaccuracies. The issue of vernacular translations thus raised two important considerations: firstly, whether the Bible should be translated at all, and secondly, which texts should act as the source for the translation, if a translation were to be sanctioned? With their philological learning, certain humanist-influenced scholars had examined the Hebrew and Greek texts and retranslated the Bible into Latin, still, of course, the international language of learning at this point.⁵ The Protestants then drew upon the results of scholarship for translation into the vernaculars. As far as Protestants were concerned, apart from the benefit to be derived from reading and following God's word, this also brought to light what they viewed as the corrupt and superstitious nature of the Catholic Church. It showed certain of its practices and doctrines to be flawed and not based on Scripture, bringing into question central doctrinal concepts such as purgatory and confession. Protestant translators sometimes highlighted these points by adding annotations with their particular interpretation to the text.⁶ By 1560, Protestant scholars and translators, including Jean Calvin, had worked on the text for several decades to obtain an accurate French Bible written in clear, modern French.

The Catholic Church in Europe as a whole took an ambiguous position on Scriptural translations, as demonstrated by the opposing attitudes shown at the

⁴ On the development of the Genevan Bible, see Bogaert, pp. 70-82.

⁵ Bogaert, pp. 48-50.

⁶ The increasing use of marginal notes for different functions (etymological and historical explanation, for instance) can be charted by following the entries in Chambers up to the 1560s. Francis Higman points to the augmentation in the type of annotation in the 1550s and 1560s offering 'une "lecture orientée"'. However, as opposed to criticism of Catholic doctrine, his example illustrates the defence of Protestant teachings in marginal notes surrounding the Epistle of James on the subject of faith and works. Francis Higman, 'La présentation typographique des Bibles genevoises du XVI^e siècle et pratiques de la lecture', in *Lire et découvrir*, pp. 573-81 (pp. 577-78).

Council of Trent in the 1540s. Certain factions pushed for a sanctioning of translations into the vernacular, whilst others attacked this stance.⁷ The matter of translation into the vernacular was to remain unresolved. Another issue was the text of the source from which interpretations should be made and any translation taken; the revision of the Vulgate was desirable to some.⁸ The second decree of session four of the Council of Trent (8 April 1546) proved influential in the way issues related to these points would be viewed by the hierarchy of the Catholic Church for several decades to follow, particularly amongst those of a conservative nature. This decree concerned the ‘acceptance of the Latin Vulgate edition of the Bible’ as well as the ‘rule on the manner of interpreting sacred scripture’ (‘recipitur vulgata editio bibliae praescribiturque modus interpretandi sacram scripturam’).⁹ It appeared to confirm the Vulgate as authoritative. This was confirmation to some that its text should not be touched in any way. Whether all of those present at Trent wished it to be seen in this light became irrelevant. Thus, it was the Vulgate from which any translation should be taken, if at all. Looking beyond these discussions, the review by Pierre-Maurice Bogaert and Jean-François Gilmont¹⁰ of Roman legislation concerning Scriptural translations in the latter half of the century reveals a lack of enthusiasm for vernacular Bibles and concludes that ‘si aucune mesure de principe n’interdit la lecture de la Bible, l’Église romaine soumet l’accès aux traductions en langues vulgaires à des formalités et des permissions bien difficiles à obtenir. L’effet dissuasif est certain’.¹¹

⁷ Vernacular translation is touched on in several places in Hubert Jedin, *A History of the Council of Trent*, trans. by Dom Ernest Graf, 2 vols (London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1957-61), II (1961), 67-69, 71-73, 75-76, 83-85, 92. For a more succinct account, see Bogaert, p. 87.

⁸ For the debate on Scripture and tradition and the importance of the Vulgate Bible, see Jedin, II, 52-98.

⁹ *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, ed. by Norman P. Tanner, 2 vols (London: Sheed & Ward, 1990), II, 664-65.

¹⁰ The second chapter of Bogaert’s *Les Bibles en français* (‘De Lefèvre d’Étaples à la fin du XVI^e siècle’) is co-authored by Bogaert and Gilmont. As there is no obvious means of distinguishing Bogaert’s work from Gilmont’s and vice-versa, I provide both names. Bogaert’s introduction to the entire work explains how the chapter was written (Bogaert, p. 8).

¹¹ Here, papal legislation from the 1590s is under examination (Bogaert, pp. 101-02 (p. 101)); earlier the 1564 Index (Trent) is discussed (Bogaert, p. 91). For full texts of the relevant Roman legislation, see Chédozeau, pp. 13-44. Roman legislation will be discussed further under epitextual considerations.

b) Catholic responses affecting the French laity: the Parisian Faculty of Theology; Nicolas de Leuze; René Benoist

In France, the position taken was often openly hostile, particularly amongst the Faculty of Theology's senior rank. The Faculty banned French translations of the Bible as early as 1523, following the publication at this time of vernacular translations of parts of the New Testament by the evangelical Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples.¹² For less progressive members in particular, a complete French Bible was unthinkable; it was considered dangerous.¹³ The 'illiterate' and 'ignorant' could not hope to understand all that was contained in the Bible; the Church's guiding hand must always accompany the text to act as interpreter. Furthermore, the Catholic laity should obey Church tradition as well as following God's word in the form of Scripture.

Benoist acted in a way which suggests he thought otherwise as regards the appropriate method of disseminating Scripture. By the 1560s, the Protestants had produced a good French Bible. Several of those at the Faculty of Theology disapproved of the Genevan Bible, but this could not remove its existence. If a member of the Catholic laity wanted access to a French Bible, he was obliged to turn to the existing Protestant Bible, printed possibly in Lyons (and thus within the borders of France), where the censorship of the Parisian authorities was far from effective.¹⁴ It was unlikely that he would use the 1550 Louvain French Bible by Nicolas de Leuze,¹⁵ the best Catholic translation in French to date, although

¹² Higman, *Censorship and the Sorbonne*, pp. 24-25; Bogaert, pp. 55-56. On the Faculty's proceedings in the 1520s concerning Bible translations, see Farge, *Orthodoxy and Reform*, pp. 177-80.

¹³ However, in terms of Catholic translations of Scripture already in existence, Chambers records that the *Bible abrégée* and *Bible historiale* were both printed in over twenty editions until the 1540s. The latter, although a more complete version of the Bible than the former, was overloaded with gloss and interpolation. Chambers, p. xi.

¹⁴ On Lyonese Bibles, Chambers, p. xiii; Bogaert, pp. 78-80.

¹⁵ On De Leuze's Bible, see Bogaert, pp. 89-91.

with limitations largely due to the negative anti-translation atmosphere in which the translator worked, in which any complete translation, no matter how conservative, was bound to be viewed with animosity. Firstly, there was the practical difficulty of finding a copy of the De Leuze Bible; there was only ever one edition published, and this, according to Bogaert and Gilmont, ‘faute d’un relai dans le royaume de France [...] ne connaît qu’une diffusion limitée’.¹⁶ Secondly, it was arguably less accurate than the Genevan Bible in that it was based on a version of the Vulgate (albeit a new Louvain edition); De Leuze also relied on Lefèvre’s French translation.¹⁷ Thus, De Leuze followed the ‘errors’ of the Vulgate, whilst depending on a work which had been substantially reworked by the Protestants in the two decades since its publication. Finally, Protestants worked hard to make the language of their Scriptural translation modern and accessible. Significantly, De Leuze actively sought **not** to make this so in some linguistic domains. Susan Baddeley highlights the dilemma that he faced:

[...] ce qu’on proposait ici était bien une version en ‘language maternel’. Quant à l’orthographe adoptée, l’auteur pouvait difficilement revenir en arrière à une orthographe entièrement ancienne, au risque de réduire par là son public, alors que les versions protestantes avaient mis tant de soin à moderniser et à simplifier la graphie. Il adopte donc l’orthographe quelque peu modernisée et certains traits de l’accentuation des bibles genevoises (à une moindre échelle), puisqu’il s’est servi des éditions genevoises, mais sans aller trop loin, car, comme il le dit lui-même dans sa préface, l’orthographe modernisée était caractéristique des bibles ‘hérétiques’ [...]¹⁸

The French Bible that Benoist published in the 1560s could be seen as a practical move to counter the Protestant Bible. The method he used was to take the best Bible translation of the time, the Genevan Bible, and to cross out the heretical words and substitute the appropriate Catholic word or meaning.¹⁹ He removed

¹⁶ Bogaert, p. 91.

¹⁷ Lefèvre’s translation of the Bible was published for the first time in its entirety in 1530. Chambers notes De Leuze’s dependence on Lefèvre’s 1530 or 1534 edition (both were complete Bibles), with the occasional use of a Genevan Bible or Bibles, which included the 1540 *Bible à l’Épée*. Chambers, pp. 167-69 (p. 168).

¹⁸ Baddeley, p. 295.

¹⁹ Chambers, pp. 366-67; Bogaert, pp. 91-93. Bogaert and Gilmont draw attention to the continuing confusion over which Protestant edition or editions were used. In a 1608 text published after his death, Benoist indicates he used a 1560 Bible; however, Chambers believes that he used several later translations (Bogaert, p. 92). For the many discussions describing the Benoist Bible controversy, see note 1.

annotations with Protestant interpretations and provided others espousing the Catholic point of view. At the time, as we shall see, Benoist was keen to stress the use of the Vulgate as the source of the translation. Benoist's method of translation is not entirely unusual; in fact, all sixteenth-century French Bibles were revisions of earlier editions, except that of Sebastien Châteillon.²⁰ As Bogaert and Gilmont comment:

Que le lecteur moderne ne se scandalise pas devant cette méthode de révision proche du plagiat. Elle est commune, du moins pour la Bible, et nombre de traducteurs agissent de même. Benoist s'inscrit dans la ligne de ceux qui ne veulent que retoucher la version courante, sans la transformer.²¹

Benoist first published a French Bible in 1566 in large expensive folio format,²² as well as a small, cheaper New Testament in the same year.²³ Foreseeing the hostility with which his translation would be met, above all amongst his colleagues at the Faculty, he added a preface to the New Testament. This defends Bible translations and refers the reader to his forthcoming 1566 Bible prefaces, which would deal with the matter in greater detail. In addition, in his 1568 Bible, a bilingual edition placing the Latin Vulgate next to the French in a smaller quarto format, Benoist reprinted the defences from his previous Bible and added two further *advertissements*, again defending the principle of translation.²⁴ By this point, his fears had been realised and Benoist was under pressure from colleagues at the Faculty to abandon the project and renounce his Bible. The 1568 *advertissements* provide a defiant response. Indeed, the inclusion of such

²⁰ On Châteillon, see Bogaert, pp. 82-86.

²¹ Bogaert, p. 93.

²² C371-74 (B1566nyv, B1566buo, B1566che and B1566gui respectively).

²³ C378-79 (N1566nyv, N1566che and N1566gui respectively). Apart from the main entries for this Latin-French New Testament, see also the addenda (Chambers, p. 549).

²⁴ C399-402 (B1568nyv, B1568buo, B1568che and B1568gui respectively). In 1568, at least two of the publishers involved in the 1566 and 1568 Bibles (Nicolas Chesneau and Michelle Guillard) shared a Latin-French New Testament edition of Benoist's text (C405-06); one year later, three of the publishers (Chesneau, Sebastien Nyvelle and Gabriel Buon) shared another Latin-French New Testament (C413-15; Guillard had died) and, in addition to this, Chesneau published a French-only Benoist New Testament (C416). According to Chambers, these editions do not contain new defences.

defences in a Bible provides an odd juxtaposition of polemic and Scripture.²⁵ Two other works directly related to the debate appeared in defence of Benoist's Bible. One anonymous pamphlet in manuscript form, later attributed to Benoist (or at least his secretary), was circulated in 1574, whilst the prolonged wrangling continued.²⁶ This contained the arguments used by Benoist from the pulpit and in public to defend the work.²⁷ The other, apparently written by Benoist, was published in 1608 following his death.²⁸ Through these successive texts we can see a fight developing against two adversaries: firstly, Protestant heretics, and secondly, his own colleagues within the Catholic Church, who failed to appreciate the need for change.²⁹

The Faculty of Theology examined the translation of 1566 at the time, condemned it, and entered into a protracted dispute with Benoist. Benoist would not definitively reject the work and prolonged the issue over several years, for example, sometimes attending Faculty committees, other times not appearing as promised.³⁰ He consistently maintained that once provided with a list of official corrections, he would rectify the translation or annotation. Indeed, he manoeuvred the *Parlement* into issuing the Faculty with an order for this list, a requirement never met. During this time, the Faculty's attitude was reflected in an extensive attack on the Bible in an anonymous book listing the shortcomings of what the author appears to have viewed as an intrinsically heretical work.³¹ The Faculty's

²⁵ Discussions of the prefatory material can be found in the work previously signalled by Pasquier, De Clercq, Bogaert and Higman ('*Advertissemens*').

²⁶ *Juste et necessaire complainte pour M. René Benoist, docteur, régent en la Faculté de Théologie, professeur des saintes lettres pour le roy, et curé de Saint Eustache à Paris, de la trop inique animosité de quelques-uns ses confreres docteurs en théologie, touchant la sainte Bible divulguée en françois sous son nom*, in *Collectio Judiciorum de novis erroribus*, ed. by Duplessis d'Argentré, II, 435-41. See Pasquier, pp. 97-98; De Clercq, p. 173; Bogaert, p. 96.

²⁷ Pasquier, p. 98.

²⁸ *Declaration de feu nostre maistre messire René Benoit docteur en theologie curé de S. Eustache à Paris, sur la traduction des Bibles et annotations d'icelles. Ensemble la censure de nostre s. pere* (Paris: Du Pré, 1608). Quoted throughout Pasquier's chapter on Benoist's Bible (pp. 85-116); see also Bogaert, p. 92.

²⁹ This battle on two fronts is perceived elsewhere (Chambers, p. 391).

³⁰ See Pasquier, pp. 90-105.

³¹ [Jacques Lefebvre?], *Observationes biblicorum lingua gallica editorum sub nomine M. Renati Benedicti*. For more details concerning the text, Pasquier, pp. 90-91; Bogaert, p. 93. Lefebvre was the Faculty's syndic and one of the five members who initially examined the Bible in 1566-67.

intransigence most likely stemmed from opposition to the principle of Bible translation;³² additionally, members were concerned by the obvious use of the Genevan Bible, particularly evident if the errata³³ or annotations are examined: thirty problematic areas were singled out for censure, all referred to the Old Testament, 28 to the annotations and only two to the actual translation.³⁴

During this controversy, despite numerous uncompromising exchanges with his colleagues, Benoist's career thrived, although he was eventually expelled from the Faculty in 1572 and a strongly-worded papal condemnation followed in 1575, when the nine-year conflict seemed at an end.³⁵ Meanwhile, Benoist obtained several important ecclesiastical positions, whilst, as M. H. Black comments, vernacular Bible translators in other countries would often consider themselves fortunate to escape persecution and death.³⁶ This is almost certainly because the royal court preferred his line to that of the Faculty of Theology. As we saw in Chapter 1, he became the *curé* of the parish of St Eustache in 1568, continued to publish polemic, preach widely and become the first *lecteur royal* in Theology in 1572, whilst the debate still raged. He had powerful defenders in the Bishop of Paris, Pierre de Gondi, who intervened to help Benoist over the Bible³⁷ and in the monarchy (for instance, King Henri III showed no inclination to act on the pope's censure and little desire to suppress Benoist's Bible).³⁸ Indeed, Benoist too was loath to submit to the pope's ruling; he did not renounce his work at this time nor did he show any signs of capitulation.³⁹

³² See Bogaert, p. 93.

³³ The errata will be discussed later.

³⁴ De Clercq, p. 172; Bogaert, p. 93.

³⁵ Expulsion from the Faculty of Theology: Duplessis d'Argentré, II, 417; papal condemnation: Duplessis d'Argentré, II, 442. Many of the Faculty proceedings concerning Benoist can be found in the second volume of Duplessis d'Argentré's work, in chronological order and under the relevant year.

³⁶ Black, p. 449.

³⁷ Pasquier, pp. 96-105.

³⁸ Pasquier, p. 102. The actions of Gondi and the monarchy suggest that they were supportive of both Benoist in general and, more specifically, Benoist's attitude to vernacular Bibles.

³⁹ For example, see Pasquier, pp. 105-06.

In fact, Benoist prevailed. In spite of attracting the disapproval of religious authorities in Paris, Christopher Plantin in Antwerp took the Benoist translation, gained an approval from the Louvain theologians and a privilege from King Philip II of Spain and published Benoist's New Testament from 1567 onwards.⁴⁰ The entire Bible was published in Antwerp in 1578.⁴¹ This version was the one on which subsequent French Catholic translations were based into the next century in Lyons, Rouen, and eventually Paris.⁴² Benoist's victory became even more emphatic when he was accepted back into the ranks of the Faculty in 1598 supported by King Henri IV.⁴³ This followed a speech renouncing his Bible, by now meaningless words, as the Bible was in common use. Benoist's 'repentant' discourse on this occasion ended thus:

*Quare et Biblia quae meo nomine vulgata a Sede Apostolica et hac ipsa Facultate damnata sunt, ego pariter damno et ea falso mihi saltem ex parte tributa et aliena respuo.*⁴⁴

Significantly, Benoist did not reject all Scriptural translations, only the French Bible published under his name. Immediately after delivering these words he became the Dean of the Faculty of Theology.

Conclusion

From the events outlined above, it is evident that Benoist showed a great determination to provide the Catholic laity with Scripture in the vernacular. As we have established in previous chapters, Benoist did not have Protestant sympathies; his reasons for acting in the way he did might therefore be due entirely to pragmatism (Catholics who wanted to read the Bible in French might as well use an edition with a Catholic text and with the Catholic interpretation in

⁴⁰ On this episode, see Bogaert, pp. 93-94.

⁴¹ Bogaert, pp. 95-98.

⁴² Bogaert, pp. 98-101; Benoist's text was still being used at the beginning of the eighteenth century (Bogaert, p. 101 (see diagram)).

⁴³ Pasquier, pp. 260-61; De Clercq, p. 174; Bogaert, p. 102.

⁴⁴ Duplessis d'Argentré, II, 534.

the marginal notes, whether access to Scripture was desirable or not) and an acknowledgement of the need to change for practical reasons. However, we have already noted his interest in pre-Reform currents; it is possible that by providing a French Bible, Benoist was following Erasmian and evangelically inspired beliefs. For Bernard Chédozeau, who interprets hostilities surrounding the affair as at least partly due to the tension between Gallican and ultramontane factions, Benoist's behaviour reveals Gallican traits;⁴⁵ this confirms what we have already concluded in previous chapters. Whatever the exact nature of his influences, the theologian shows a considerable desire to instruct the laity in this manner. Benoist's commitment to his French Bible also demonstrates that he was prepared to go against the wishes of the Faculty of Theology and, in spirit at the very least, Rome.

2

Peritext

Let us now pass to the peritext surrounding early-printed French Bibles, beginning with the texts – usually prefatory material – in which translators, printers and publishers raise various points. Firstly, we examine what Benoist says about Bibles in the Bibles themselves: a summary of the important features of the theologian's comments on his enterprise is provided and we also look at points arising from his errata. This is then followed by a survey of material found in other Bibles. Of course, as these comments were written to accompany vernacular Bibles, they must be read in a context of peritext. Finally, we turn to other peritextual elements and considerations of the general presentation of Bibles, in particular the layout of Benoist's 1566 Bible.

⁴⁵ Chédozeau, pp. 110-14 (and notes). For instance, in 1569, Benoist took the matter to the *Conseil du roi*; Chédozeau underlines the theologian's Gallican tendencies in doing so. Chédozeau, p. 112.

I) Benoist ‘au Lecteur’

Betty Chambers’ bibliography of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century French Bibles and New Testaments contains 554 entries.⁴⁶ Although several of these can be discounted as ghosts, this is undoubtedly a large and, as can be seen from the entries, rapidly evolving mass of books. Chambers’ work locates the sources used by the translator (or more often the reviser), for example, pinpointing the specific edition used for the Old Testament translation and recording the provenance of the New Testament’s annotations, if present; she also provides a list of the contents of each Bible, signalling the titles of prefatory material and indices, for instance, and so revealing what are sometimes large quantities of peritextual additions. It is evident from the information Chambers provides that numerous Bibles and New Testaments contained prefaces and other additional texts written by those involved in the process of disseminating Scripture in the vernacular.⁴⁷ These texts are usually in French, but occasionally in Latin; sometimes their authorship is uncertain. Some material was ephemeral, whilst, on the other hand, other prefaces were reprinted many times. Generally speaking, the authors cover a range of points (for instance, the legitimacy of vernacular translation, matters affecting the presentation of the Bible, the intended readership and the way one should read the text) which, as we shall see, may vary according to confessional beliefs and date of publication.

Historians such as Bogaert and Gilmont interested in early-printed French Bibles discuss some parts of this type of material, especially those found in what are seen as ‘landmark’ editions (for example, Benoist’s Bibles); Chambers also provides brief details from or about a significant proportion of them. However, if one considers the large quantity of these texts, these discussions are on occasion limited in scope, primarily because peritextual additions are not the central

⁴⁶ Chambers, pp. i-iv.

⁴⁷ This can be ascertained by even the quickest perusal of Chambers’ entries.

concern. Benoist's material is one of the exceptions to this rule.⁴⁸ This and the following section provide the results of studying a large range of the peritextual material referred to above;⁴⁹ the findings reveal similarities and differences with Benoist's peritext, indicate possible influences and underline the consequences of his work. Whilst concentrating on the theologian's concerns, these sections also seek to convey several of the common issues which recur in the material and the multiple uses of this form of peritext.

On presenting his translations to the public, Benoist used peritextual material to defend what he knew would cause controversy amongst his colleagues. Summaries of observations and concerns from the peritext to four of Benoist's works containing Scriptural translations are provided below, in order of the appearance of the translations.

a) Latin-French New Testament (1566)

If we turn to the 1566 New Testament first, Benoist supplies a short preface or *advertissement*.⁵⁰ Here, Benoist's tone is slightly different from that employed in later defences, which seem more down-to-earth. His use of the graphic biblical comparison of God's word being similar to a fountain of water is striking and dominates the text. It forms the opening lines:

Non sans grande et juste raison (Lecteur Chrestien) la vivifiante parole de Dieu eternal est comparée à une fontaine d'eau vive, de laquelle je pense avoir parlé David, quand il a escrit, que le fleuve courant esjouit la cité de Dieu. Car comme les terres arrousées par le decoulement des eaues vives sont rendues fertiles, sans lesquelles elles seroyent steriles,

⁴⁸ For example, historians and textual analysts have produced studies centred on certain of Benoist's texts (see Higman, '*Advertissemens*') or at least with a significant amount of space given over to their contents (see De Clercq).

⁴⁹ See my bibliography for the Bibles and New Testaments consulted.

⁵⁰ C379, N1566gui, '*Advertissement par forme de preface et avant propos*', fols *2^r-*3^v. I have as yet seen no reference to this preface by any modern historian. It is not clear from Chambers' bibliography whether the preface is reproduced in the 1568 Benoist New Testament published in Paris (C405-06); it is included in the 1569 Benoist New Testaments printed there (C413-16).



ainsi l'Eglise de Dieu, qui est la sainte congregation des esleus, par le moyen de la parole de Dieu, est tellement faicte feconde, qu'elle rend divers et copieux fruicts de bonnes oeuvres en l'exercice de la religion chrestienne à Jesus Christ, lequel l'a semée, plantée et arrosée.⁵¹

As discussed in Chapter 2, Benoist was not the first to use this image of the word as a fountain of living water in such a context. Protestants also used the image, but they would progress from the 'vivifiante parole' to the individual, whereas Benoist moves directly to the Church.

In the preface, Benoist argues that matters have gone awry since the times of the Early Church when the lifegiving nature of God's word was acknowledged; Satan has endeavoured to halt the spread of it by establishing inept and unsuitable pastors. In addition to this, heretics have misused God's word in a way that renders it lethal. The comments, although aimed at heretics (Protestants, no doubt), thus also criticise the Catholic Church's position on vernacular Bibles and question the ability of some ecclesiastics, thus seeming to court yet more controversy amongst his colleagues.

Benoist claims to restore God's word to its original purity – using the Vulgate (Benoist therefore accepts its authority) – which can be provided to Christians in place of the poison of the heretics:

Ce que considerant, j'ay tousjours tasché, par la grace de Dieu, à nettoyer et desbourber les propres conduits et canaulx, à fin que le peuple Chrestien sitibond, eust par le moyen d'iceux l'eaue vive et nette de la pure parole de Dieu, pour estancher sa soif et oster son alteration, rejettant le venin et poison des heretiques. Pour atteindre lequel point, j'ay pensé estre beaucoup expedient que je ne dise necessaire, proposer en nostre langue vulgaire toute la Bible selon la version vulgate et commune, receuë et approuvée en l'Eglise Catholique, avec annotations et expositions des lieux les plus difficiles, et principalement de ceux lesquels les heretiques de nostre temps ont depraveez, pour d'iceux

⁵¹ C379, N1566gui, 'Advertissement par forme de preface et avant propos', fol. *2^r. Benoist provides a note referring us to 'Psal. 45. 5.'. (In the Authorised King James version, the reference is Psalm 46. 4.) Whilst Benoist uses the Vulgate's numbering of psalms in his marginal notes, as Higman notes of Benoist's 1566 Bible, the theologian's psalm numeration in his vernacular translation of the Bible follows that of the Genevan text, which adopts the Hebrew and not the Vulgate's numbering; Benoist refers to the psalms when he alludes to the mistakes in his edition in the sixth 'advertissement apologetique' (see entry below on 1566 Bible). Higman comments 'il se trahit!'. Higman, 'Advertissemens', p. 565 (including n. 8).

pretexer leurs erronées et faulses opinions, comme tu pourras facilement cognoistre, en lisant ce present livre du nouveau Testament.⁵²

Significantly, Benoist makes it clear in the above lines that additional guidance is necessary (and thus here takes the traditional Catholic approach): he has added marginal notes. In the text, Benoist proceeds to claim that ‘imprimeurs sectaires’ have tampered with his Bible, an attack reproduced in his subsequent texts.⁵³ To conclude, the theologian underlines the fact that his Bible is there to replace a heretical version:

[...] comme encores il [Satan] s’efforce par plusieurs moyens [printers have just been mentioned] de l’empescher du tout, à fin que par ce moyen il gaigne ce poinct, que les Chrestiens estans privez des livres saints de la Sainte Bible, proposée selon la version et exposition de l’Eglise Catholique, gouvernée par le Saint Esprit, il les attire et retienne pernicieusement en la lecture des Bibles et autres livres damnables proposez par les heretiques.⁵⁴

Thus, in the preface, a variety of points are raised. Above all, Benoist emphasises the necessity of vernacular Bibles (a controversial viewpoint to hold within the Catholic Church, as we have seen) and makes it seem as though his translation is crucial. He stresses its importance for the Church and Christians throughout and highlights its additional benefit of revealing the lies of heretics, presumably those working in Geneva. In the text, Benoist appears to claim a role as an important defender of the Catholic Church, although part of his defence of the Church is to criticise inept Catholic clerics. Even if the Faculty disagrees on principle with the idea of vernacular Bibles, he appeals to their common sense; a vernacular version must be provided to root out the corruptions of the heretics, to displace the heretical Genevan text and to vie with the market for these translations.

⁵² C379, N1566gui, ‘Advertissement par forme de preface et avant propos’, fol. *3^r.

⁵³ The accusations made against printers will be discussed below under ‘errata’.

⁵⁴ C379, N1566gui, ‘Advertissement par forme de preface et avant propos’, fols *3^{r-v}.

b) French Bible (1566)⁵⁵

Benoist expands on these arguments in the more prosaic 1566 Bible prefaces, in both the dedication to King Charles IX and six ‘*advertissemens apologetiques*’.⁵⁶ In the dedication, he introduces the idea of the four stratagems of Satan:

Premierement il a osté les bons et operaires pasteurs de l'Eglise. Secondement il a comme caché et absconsé l'escriture sainte et parole de Dieu. Tiercement il a desraciné l'amour et crainte de Dieu des coeurs des hommes. Finablement il a envoyé des faulx prophetes, ministres de son mensonge et impieté, pour seduire les hommes charnelz et ignorans de la parole de Dieu, et verité Evangelique.⁵⁷

Here, echoing the New Testament preface to a large extent, Benoist provides a range of arguments, encompassing traditional Gallican complaints concerning clerical abuses used also by writers such as Ronsard, as well as criticism of heretics. Both of these targets were singled out in the preface to the New Testament and the theologian's remarks in these areas have been noted in Chapter 2; these were subjects to which he often returned in various works. The lengthy dedication discusses all four stratagems, paying particular attention to the first two; Benoist views the Bible as the essential weapon in a spiritual war against heresy and heretics, in which appropriate soldiers and captains need ‘*armes et munitions*’ which include the Bible. By using an account of the deeds of Josiah, the Old Testament boy-king, in the latter part of the defence, Benoist emphasises that the Bible must be brought to light and purged of heretical corruptions;⁵⁸ the need to restore the appropriate ‘*livre de la Loy et religion ancienne*’ in a time of heresy and conflict is stressed. Josiah sought and then re-established this text in a world of heresy and abuses; this account is clearly aimed at forming a flattering parallel with Charles IX, the young king. Towards the end of the conclusion, Benoist underlines that the Bible is a necessary, God-given tool for instruction

⁵⁵ Quotations from Benoist's Bible have been taken from the 1568 edition. For discussions of the 1566 and 1568 prefaces, see De Clercq (pp. 168-69 (1566 texts)) and Higman ('*Advertissemens*', pp. 565-67 (1566 texts) and pp. 568-70 (1568 texts)).

⁵⁶ Dedication: C399, B1568nyv, 'Au treschrestien Roy', fols †2^r-†4^r; 'advertissemens': C399, B1568nyv, 'Advertissemens apologetiques', fols †4^v-†5^r.

⁵⁷ C399, B1568nyv, 'Au treschrestien Roy', fol. †2^r.

⁵⁸ See II Kings 21. 24 and II Chronicles 33. 25 onwards.

and edification, and that it will remove heresy and restore unity to the Church. As in the New Testament, Benoist asserts that Satan has hidden the Bible and used heretics to corrupt the text. In the conclusion to the dedication, Benoist lingers on the subject of heretical Bibles, which, at the very least, implicitly suggests to fellow theologians the practical usefulness of this translation.

Benoist's six 'advertissemens apologetiques' defend the translator himself, vernacular Bibles and his particular Bible. On the subject of himself, the translator defends his motives, intentions and orthodoxy. Regarding vernacular Bibles, new arguments appear, as well as recycled material: he argues that the Council of Trent permits vernacular Bibles (arguable, as discussed previously) and that opponents to translations should recognise that times have changed. The latter statement thus challenges the Faculty's stance as out of date. Benoist argues that French in itself is not heretical: heretical works are also found in Latin, Greek and Hebrew. Of course, Benoist's colleagues would not necessarily have said that French was heretical, but rather that it was inappropriate for certain texts such as Scripture to be made available in French; as previously discussed, Benoist was in fact amongst the first of the Catholic theologians to write on theological matters in the vernacular. Finally, Benoist asserts that even if a Bible is in the vernacular, it cannot be understood without Church guidance, and so takes an orthodox and conciliatory position. If we examine the points raised specifically regarding Benoist's Bible, we see, for instance, that Benoist claims again to have used the Vulgate as the source for his translation, whilst this time admitting to having also used the heretical Bible. In this, he claims to be taking back what belongs to the Catholic Church; after all, he says, even heretics cannot propagate lies alone. As in the New Testament, Benoist attributes imperfections in his text to the printers. On a final point, Benoist makes the great effort involved in the large project clear, dismisses the need for eloquence (something we have already discussed in Chapter 2) and, in conciliatory manner, invites corrections.

Throughout, Benoist strives to portray himself as humble and orthodox; his attitude is defensive, but also confident and unflinching. His argumentation mixes protestation of the orthodox, and that he is doing nothing wrong, with the practical, as well as adding several appeasing thoughts aimed at fellow theologians. Above all, he presents his translation as a necessary offering that he is ready to amend. Higman perceives three themes to the 1566 material: ‘l’incompétence et le laxisme des prélats, la nécessité d’avoir à disposition une bonne traduction catholique de la Bible, et la justification des [sic] ses emprunts aux Bibles calvinistes’;⁵⁹ the first two themes are certainly dominant, the third point is striking in its frankness and all three are likely to provoke Benoist’s colleagues.

c) Latin-French Bible (1568)

In addition to the 1566 Bible prefaces, two *advertissements* are included in the 1568 Bible. The first advertises the existence of the second at the back of the Bible and talks of this ‘laborieux et beaucoup proffitable’ work.⁶⁰ The second more substantial *advertissement* relates the trials of Benoist since publication of his first Bible.⁶¹ The new text defends his motives and the principle of translation, whilst criticising opponents, but in a fairly carefully written attack. The Faculty had emerged as one of his most influential critics and rather than opposing them head on, Benoist seeks to establish a more conciliatory position. Consequently, the text mingles reason and excuse with an attack deflected onto various parties. Again, he reproduces past arguments, whilst also adding fresh material. The usual opponents reappear, with the notable addition of booksellers: they do not like the competition provided by his Bible, but want to sell the Genevan Bibles they have already purchased. In juxtaposition, Benoist lines up his supporters, who include the *Parlement*, Kings Charles IX and Philip II, and the Louvain theologians who

⁵⁹ Higman, ‘*Advertissemens*’, pp. 566-67.

⁶⁰ C399, B1568nyv, ‘*Advertissement*’, fol. †10^v.

have approved his work. He also mentions the previous Catholic Bibles in French (these were, in fact, hardly complete and accurate versions, such as the edition he had provided) and asserts that the Pope and Council of Trent are not in opposition to what he has done. He also writes of the enormity of the job; it was a massive undertaking requiring the work of many, and like all great works, fraught with difficulties. Like everything else, he argues, nothing is perfect at its beginnings.

Higman recognizes three main spheres of discourse:⁶² firstly, Benoist describes the assault made against him by the ‘Apolyonistes’ or Protestants (stemming from this, printers have been influenced in their dealings, lies spread about Benoist’s good name and his other works, and conflict provoked within the Faculty of Theology, where his own colleagues have been turned against him); secondly, Benoist tackles the actions of his colleagues at the Faculty and blanket criticism of ecclesiastics is made; thirdly, the translator defends borrowings from heretics. The first two of these dominate the *advertissement* and the third is certainly noteworthy considering the date of publication and the debate it might provoke at this point. Once again, Benoist’s preoccupation with heretics and clerical abuses takes a prominent role. Benoist develops the argument in several directions, using points covered in his 1566 prefatory material, expanding on these, and sometimes adding new arguments of varying quality and credibility. Above all he is pragmatic and direct, no doubt encouraged by the support he received from some quarters in spite of the Faculty’s opposition.

⁶¹ C399, B1568nyv, ‘Advertissement apologetique’, fols &1^r-&3^r.

⁶² Higman, ‘*Advertissemens*’, pp. 568-70.

Errata

Historians have rightly pointed to the errata of the 1566 and 1568 Bibles, which indicate Benoist’s use of a Protestant Bible as his source.⁶³ If we look at part of the 1566 errata, it tells its own story:

Table 3.1 *The errata of Benoist’s 1566 French Bible*⁶⁴

Recueil d’aucunes fautes du Nouveau Testament [...] aux annotations des marges [...]		
Aussi en quelques Sommaires et au texte pour ces motz.	Repentance Amendement	Lisez, Penitence.
	Amendez vous Repentez vous	Lisez, Faictes Penitence.

Those words in the central column are quite clearly Protestant expressions and those on the right the Catholic equivalents.⁶⁵ The New Testament was, according to its preface, produced before the 1566 Bible. Benoist appears to have therefore swiftly identified these slips which take Scripture away from the Catholic interpretation and practice, for we find in the New Testament errata ‘Lisez aussi aux Sommaires des chapitres [...] pour, Repentance, Penitence’.⁶⁶ These slips, which question the tenets of the Catholic Church, no doubt ensured the condemnation of Benoist’s Bible, although the Faculty’s list of problematic areas related to the Old Testament and not the New Testament, from which these ‘errors’ derive. The list obviously did not contain all of the Faculty’s objections.

⁶³ For example, Higman comments on the 1566 errata (Higman, ‘*Advertissemens*’, p. 567) and Bogaert and Gilmont the 1568 errata (Bogaert, p. 95).

⁶⁴ C373, B1566che, fol. Ili7^v (p. 510).

⁶⁵ For example, whereas Catholic translators following the Vulgate’s Latin translation use the words ‘faites penitence’ (‘do penance’) which imply outward action and the sacrament of penance, Protestants employed the words ‘amendez vous’ or ‘repentez vous’ (‘repent’) with psychological, inward connotations, influenced by Erasmus’ examination of the Greek texts and his assessments in this area. Alister McGrath, explaining this episode with reference to Matthew 4.17, underlines the significance of Erasmus’ (and earlier Valla’s) scholarship: ‘Once more, an important justification of the sacramental system of the church was challenged.’ Alister E. McGrath, *Reformation Thought: An Introduction*, 3rd edn (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), p. 55.

In a note to the 1568 errata which contains the same mistakes, Benoist blames the printers yet again:⁶⁷

Amy lecteur, nous te prions excuser icy les autres fautes legieres que tu pourras rencontrer et corriger de toymesme: ayant esgard à plusieurs incommoditez et difficultez qui nous sont survenues en ceste impression commencee y a trois ans ou plus: et maintenant achevee, par la grace de Dieu, avec autant grandes peines (je l'ose dire) qui ayent jamais peu advenir en aucune autre impression de livre: à cause, principalement d'aucuns imprimeurs qui plus nous y ont donné de fascheries et traverses que ne voudrions en avoir expérimenté.⁶⁸

Printers were the scapegoats in all three of the works above. However, Benoist was aware of the slips from the beginning and they were not corrected. He tries to defend himself each time by deflecting the blame, but does not ensure the removal of the problems in an edition which appears many months later; even if the printing of it had been commenced at the same time as the earlier editions and it received the same treatment, there had been time to rectify these slips. His insistence of a belief in their guilt could be sincere and it might be a correct assessment. On the other hand, they might not have introduced 'errors' on purpose. If they received a 'purified' Protestant Bible, with changes written on top of a printed edition, it may have been difficult to identify the corrections. Equally, Benoist may have made mistakes in a venture hastily carried out. It is certainly hard to believe that Benoist would have left in Protestantisms deliberately; this is something he was never accused of at the time, as far as I have been able to ascertain.

⁶⁶ C379, N1566gui, 'Correction de quelques fautes plus notables en l'impression', fol. A1^v. (Noted in Chambers, p. 372.) According to the page references given, this error relates only to the translation of the Acts of the Apostles.

⁶⁷ It is interesting to note that if we examine Matthew 3. 2 in the 1566 Bible, the marginal note referring to the text's 'faictes penitence' reads 'ou, repentez vous'. The marginal note remains the same in the 1568 Bible, but its text contains the Protestant terminology 'amendez vous'. The marginal note should have been suppressed in both; furthermore, in the 1568 Bible, the Protestant term seems to have been restored. However, we cannot be sure when the type was set for this edition; indeed, the note to the 1568 errata (see main text) indicates that it might have taken place three or more years prior to 1568.

⁶⁸ C399, B1568nyv, fol. &4^v.

d) Tobit (1579)⁶⁹

Tobit was and is still, of course, regarded by Protestants as part of the Apocrypha, and thus not canonical. Thirteen years after his first Bible and four years after its condemnation by the Pope, Benoist issued a French edition of Tobit. By publishing this particular translation, he was simultaneously instructing his reader and defending a book considered by the Protestants as not belonging to the biblical canon. Two texts of particular relevance in the area of Bible translation are added. Firstly, he discusses the subject in the dedicatory epistle.⁷⁰ He develops the argument for printing an edition of Tobit as follows:

- God wanted to teach us to know, serve, honour and adore Him, so he gave us several sacred books.
- If we could choose one as a summary of the Bible, it would be Tobit. This demonstrates the true Catholic religion in doctrine and practice.
- It can be read without danger, ‘dequoy me [Benoist] porteront tesmoignage tous ceux qui l’ayant leu en voudront parler syncerement et sans passion’.
- As regards any difficult passages, ‘cela sera à l’endroit de la puissance du diable sur les hommes et du moyen d’en estre preservé.’ Benoist comments that notes and *advertissements* have been added concerning spells ‘affin que rien ne fust laissé qui peust causer difficulté au Lecteur’.

⁶⁹ René Benoist, *Traicté enseignant en bref les causes des malefices, sortileges et enchanteries, tant des ligatures et neuds d’esguillettes pour empescher l’action et exercice du mariage qu’autres, et du remede qu’il faut avoir à l’encontre* (Paris: Poupy, 1579). Despite the title, this work is dominated by a French translation of the book of Tobit. The text of the translation will be discussed later under epitextual considerations; I will also return to issues surrounding the translation of the book of Tobit and Benoist’s argumentation in the peritextual additions to this publication.

⁷⁰ Benoist, *Traicté enseignant en bref les causes des malefices*, ‘A Madame Anne de Thou, Dame de Cheverny, Femme de Messire Phelipes Hurault, Chevalier Viconte de Cheverny, Garde des Seaux de France’, fols Ee1^v-Ee2^r. Anne gave birth to their third of four sons in 1579; evidently, no ‘remedy’ was needed in her marriage.

- Finally, as Benoist departs into praise of the dedicatee, he stresses the excellence and use of Tobit which have prompted him to provide a French translation, ‘comme estant une petite Bible populaire’.⁷¹

Although guidance has to be provided in places, Benoist has no scruples in providing this work for the laity. At this point, it is hard to ascertain Benoist’s attitude to complete Bible translations, though.

In an *advertissement* at the back, Benoist comments that the Bible in this form (and not merely the book of Tobit) is a useful tool, even for the *simples* and *indoctes* of society:

J’ay pensé estre bon et beaucoup profitable aux simples et bien affectés chrestiens, de proposer ce livre entier. [...] il est plein de merueilleusement belles instructions chrestiennes et morales, fort utiles à toutes personnes tant doctes que indoctes: et a ma volonté que l’on eust choisi du corps de la sainte bible les oeuvres qui sont de pareille tant facilité, que utilité a cestuicy, pour les distribuer et communiquer aux Laiques desireus de lire la bible pour leur edification et confirmation en leur foy et religion, laissant tous les autres oeuvres et livres trop difficiles aux hommes doctes et sçavans tant pasteurs que docteurs, qui ont la charge d’instruire et enseigner les autres. A mon advis que cela seroit un moyen de pacifier beaucoup des choses. Ainsi en la vieille loy il y avoit discretion en la proposition et leçon des livres de la sainte bible, livre divin et difficile, lequel ne doit indifferemment estre permis a tous, ny aussi trop durement dénié a tous en quelconque langue que ce soit. Il est icy besoing de zele et de prudence chrestienne. Suives y le Concile.⁷²

Benoist appears to restrict the way in which this text is useful to moral and Christian instruction. However, he argues that the laity should be allowed access to Scripture in the vernacular, although difficult texts should be left to theologians and pastors. The masses should not be permitted access indiscriminately, but on the other hand, Scripture should not be denied ‘trop durement’. Benoist is here ambiguous as regards which texts should be permitted, but clearly undeterred by the papal condemnation, which only in fact referred to one particular edition of

⁷¹ The above comments are found on fol. Ee1^v of the *Traicté enseignant en bref les causes des malefices*.

⁷² Benoist, *Traicté enseignant en bref les causes des malefices*. ‘Advertissement au Lecteur’, fol. li3^r (fol. 249^r).

the French Bible. Finally, yet again, Benoist refers to the Council of Trent, but does not expand on this fleeting reference.

In a third text (the *argument* introducing the book of Tobit), Benoist talks further of the ways in which Tobit can be read and understood, which sound similar to Protestant views on the Apocrypha. The reader is guided to certain levels of understanding:

Pour cela est le pretendu du saint Esprit en ce Livre plein de doctrine non legale, sapientielle ou prophetique, mais morale et historique, en laquelle nous sommes instruitz plainement et evidemment quel est Dieu vers ceux qui l'ayment de tout leur coeur [...]⁷³

However, elsewhere, Benoist calls the book canonical;⁷⁴ he also talks of the excellent teachings for all in Tobit 'au sens allegoric'.⁷⁵ This places Benoist in orthodox territory, and, as the book has copious explanatory notes, any different levels of understanding are sure to be interpreted by Benoist, a Catholic theologian, and thus legitimately.

It is unclear whether Benoist's position on vernacular Bibles has changed since the Bible controversy; he does support the dissemination of Scripture, but seems cautious as to which books of the Bible should be available indiscriminately. By publishing two complete Bibles, he facilitated unlimited access to all books, although he did of course provide copious notes to guide the reader, which perhaps rendered the exercise admissible to him. It is evident that Benoist is unwilling to be as direct and open as before. He is enthusiastic about the translation of Tobit, but evasive as regards other parts of Scripture. Unlike in previous texts, he does not tackle opponents or the issue of translation head on, nor does he involve himself in polemic criticising clerical abuses or heretics; he avoids this by instead concentrating on the benefits of Tobit.

⁷³ Benoist, *Traicté enseignant en bref les causes des malefices*, 'Argument sur le livre de Tobie', fol. Ee5^v (fol. 219^v).

⁷⁴ See, for instance, the dedication, fol. Ee1^v.

⁷⁵ Benoist, *Traicté enseignant en bref les causes des malefices*, Chapter 4 of the *Traicté* signalled in the title, fol. Ee5^r (fol. 219^r).

Conclusion

To conclude this section briefly, it appears that the importance of God's word in the form of Scripture, the principle of translation into the vernacular, the Bible's uses (for example, as a spiritual weapon), levels of understanding, difficulties in the text and the role of the Church in interpreting Scripture are topics for discourse in Benoist's peritextual additions. Personal grievances, heresy and heretics, marginal notes and embarrassing errata, the assertion of legitimacy and ecclesiastical and royal approval, disclaimers as to accuracy and invitations to the public for corrections also play a prominent role in the above material. It is evident that Benoist's style changes in the texts. The 1579 texts show a distinct break and shift of focus; clarity is replaced with ambiguity and polemic with enthusiastic praise. This is perhaps the result of the papal condemnation; it may have forced Benoist to change course in his argumentation surrounding translations and in his approach to vernacular Bibles. An aggressive, confrontational style had failed to persuade the Faculty to change its mind and, furthermore, was unnecessary following Plantin's publication of 1578 in which the entire translation had been published once again.

II) Benoist's peritext in context

Let us now compare the peritextual additions of other translators, printers and publishers with the texts we have considered above. The following results were compiled by examining a substantial number of early-printed French Bibles and New Testaments dating from the late fifteenth century to the end of the sixteenth century. Although this cannot be a fully comprehensive survey due to the rarity of extant versions and the resources at my disposal, a large quantity of copies was consulted.

a) Medieval, humanist and evangelical Bibles

To commence, we return to Bibles first published before the spread of Lutheranism. Those involved in the earliest French Bibles had no notion of breaking with the Catholic Church; the first French Bible approaching a complete version, the *Bible historiale*, ordered by King Charles VIII, appeared at a time when religious works dominated the presses and when there were movements within the Gallican Church to instruct the laity by publishing religious texts in the vernacular.⁷⁶ In its prefatory material, the *Bible historiale* shows that at least some pre-Reformation scholars would have agreed with certain of Benoist's uses for the Bible. In the prologue, it is suggested that Bibles should be read for moral edification and instruction.⁷⁷ In fact, Bible reading is recommended as a good means of avoiding idleness, 'ennemie de l'ame', and its consequences:

Pour ce, gens lubriques, qui vostre temps passez en oysiveté, je vous prie arrestez vous en ceste lecture et l'incorporez en voz cueurs et vous en aurez plus grant prouffit que de passer vostre temps en jeux, yvrongnetez, paillardisses et autres choses desplaisantes à nostre createur.⁷⁸

The prologue here stresses a practical use, which has some resonance with Benoist's prefaces advocating the Bible for the purpose of edification and as a practical means to oust heretical versions of God's word. Benoist also stressed the spiritual benefit to be gained, a sentiment found in the prologues to the *Bible*

⁷⁶ C13, BH[c.1495-96]ver, Chambers, pp. 13-18; Bogaert, pp. 38-41. This Bible 'represents a completion (by means of translations from the Vulgate and miscellaneous glosses) of Guyart [...] des Moulins' French version (late 13th-century) of Petrus Comestor's Latin *Historia scolastica* (late 12th-century)' and work on it was overseen by Jean de Rély, the king's confessor (Chambers, p. 16). The trends to publish vernacular religious texts in this period will be discussed further in Chapter 4.

⁷⁷ I refer here to the prologue commencing 'Povres pecheurs aveuglez de bien faire', added c.1505 (C15, BH[c.1505]ver), an amalgam of the prefaces by Jean de Rély and Guyart des Moulins found in the first edition. Chambers, pp. 20-22 (p. 22). Quotations have been taken from C17, BH[c.1510]ver, 'the base text for all subsequent *Bibles historiales* published in France'. Chambers, pp. 24-25 (p. 25). The prologue is located in the first volume on fol. a1^v.

⁷⁸ C17, BH[c.1510]ver, I, 'Povres pecheurs aveuglez de bien faire', fol. a1^v.

historiale, where it is emphasised that to find the path to eternal glory, God's word must be read and reflected upon.⁷⁹

The *Bible historiale* is proposed as a book for the literate laity and those in the Catholic Church's ranks who have no Latin, as well as the illiterate who can benefit by being read to:

Et a esté la translacion faicte non pas pour les clerchez, mais pour les laiz et simples religieux et hermites qui ne sont pas licterez comme ils doivent, aussi pour autres bonnes personnes qui vivent selon la loy de jesuchrist, lesquelz par le moyen de ce livre pourront nourrir leurs ames de divines histoires, et enseigner plusieurs gens simples et ignorans.⁸⁰

Before the threat of Lutheranism, the dissemination of God's word to the laity in this form was not the controversial issue it later became and therefore this prologue does not have Benoist's battling, polemical style when promoting the availability of the Bible for the laity; it is not an exercise which requires this approach.⁸¹ This Bible was reprinted in Paris until the mid-1540s⁸² (and thus after the Faculty's ban on vernacular translations of Scripture) and escaped the condemnation which Benoist's text received. In fact, in 1568, Benoist used the existence of a Bible translation dating back three centuries (surely the *Bible historiale*) as a defence.⁸³ The discrepancy can be explained if we consider the difference between the two translations. The prologue to the earlier Bible indicates:

Vous povez lire ce present livre qui est la sainte bible, laquelle a esté translâtée de latin en françois sans riens adjoûter que pure verité comme il est en la bible latine: riens n'a esté laissé sinon choses qui ne se doivent point translater.⁸⁴

⁷⁹ See especially C17, BH[c.1510]ver, II, 'Le prologue. Pour inciter tous bons chrestiens [...]', fol. B4^v, which was also first found in C15, BH[c.1505]ver. See Chambers, p. 22.

⁸⁰ C17, BH[c.1510]ver, I, 'Povres pecheurs aveuglez de bien faire', fol. a1^v.

⁸¹ It should be noted, however, that the nature of the *Bible historiale* – folio editions with woodcuts – put it beyond the purse of all but the richer members of the laity, and so its availability was restricted. Chambers observes that the first edition is 'lavishly illustrated' (Chambers, p. 17).

⁸² It was also printed in Lyons until 1531. Bogaert, p. 40 (see diagram).

⁸³ C399, B1568nyv, 'Advertissement apologetique', fol. &2^v.

⁸⁴ C17, BH[c.1510]ver, I, 'Povres pecheurs aveuglez de bien faire', fol. a1^v. Text also reproduced in Bogaert, p. 41.

This confirms the use of the Vulgate; it also indicates that the text has been modified both by addition and omission. This Bible's text is quite different from Benoist's complete version with no gaps and which is based on Protestant scholarship using Hebrew and Greek sources. Of course, in theory, Benoist acknowledged the Vulgate as authoritative. In addition to the above, the additions within the *Bible historiale's* text – based on the standard interlinear gloss to the medieval Bible – are difficult to distinguish from Scripture and although Benoist recognised the need to guide the reader through the use of annotations, integrated glosses had been removed due to the actions of humanists, evangelicals, and then Reformers who had influenced the form of the text in the meantime. The time when gloss could be used had gone, even amongst Catholics; it was an outdated aspect to Bibles by the 1560s and there could be no return to it.

Let us now move to later calls for vernacular Bibles, and humanist and evangelical thought. Although it was not a vernacular version of the New Testament, the influence of Erasmus' 1516 *Novum Instrumentum*, containing the Greek with a new Latin translation, was great.⁸⁵ As such, it is appropriate to consider here some of the points contained in its preface, the 'Paraclesis' (meaning 'summons' or 'exhortation').⁸⁶ Christian humanists such as Erasmus would clearly have concurred with Benoist's assertion that it was essential to have God's word. The summons of Erasmus' 'Paraclesis' went out to the Christian and exhorted him to read God's word, although in a more aggressive fashion than Benoist ('I exhort all men to the most holy and wholesome study of Christian philosophy and summon them as if with the blast of a trumpet, that an eloquence far different than Cicero's be given me: an eloquence certainly much more efficacious, if less ornate than his').⁸⁷ However, unlike Benoist, Erasmus is

⁸⁵ The translation itself was controversial because it was based on Greek sources, as opposed to the Vulgate; the prefatory material was also controversial, as the following discussion shows.

⁸⁶ *Christian Humanism and the Reformation: Selected Writings with 'The Life of Erasmus' by Beatus Rhenanus*, ed. by John C. Olin (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), pp. 92-106 (p. 92).

⁸⁷ Olin, p. 93. Olin draws attention to the conclusion, which vividly conveys Erasmus' belief in the importance of Scripture, which 'bring[s] you the living image of His holy mind and the speaking, healing, dying, rising Christ Himself, and thus they render Him so fully present that you would see less if you gazed upon Him with your very eyes' (p. 92).

ready to claim that Scripture is easy to understand and that no guidance is needed from men (including, one supposes, Catholic theologians):

The journey is simple, and it is ready for anyone. Only bring a pious and open mind, possessed above all with a pure and simple faith. Only be docile, and you have advanced far in this philosophy. It itself supplies inspiration as a teacher which communicates itself to no one more gladly than to minds that are without guile. The teachings of the others, besides the fact that they give hope of a false happiness, drive off the natural talents of many by the very difficulty, it is clear, of their precepts.⁸⁸

Erasmus then calls explicitly for vernacular translations, and envisages ‘even the lowliest women read[ing] the Gospels and the Pauline Epistles’, as well as the farmer at his plough and the weaver at his shuttle singing and humming parts of the Bible.⁸⁹ Benoist does not advocate such free and indiscriminate use of the Bible, especially in his later 1579 text; no doubt, were he to subscribe to a view anything like this, he would have to be more cautious because of the political and religious climate during the Wars of Religion and the Faculty’s ban on translations. In addition to this, by 1566, it had become clear that what humanists had advocated, even if one could agree with them in principle, was not always workable, in particular following the break from the Church by Reformers. If one promoted the dissemination of Bible translations, but wanted to remain within the Catholic Church, the form had to retain the guiding hand of the Church.

On a final point of comparison, as in other works, Erasmus was quick to point to the failings of the Catholic Church; for example, his preface points to the theologians’ neglect of Scripture. He also questions the behaviour of theologians and monks:

For I fear that one may find among the theologians men who are far removed from the title they bear, that is, men who discuss earthly matters, not divine, and that among the monks who profess the poverty of Christ and the contempt of the world you may find something more than worldliness.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Olin, p. 96.

⁸⁹ Olin, p. 97.

⁹⁰ Olin, pp. 97-98.

As we have seen, criticisms of the Catholic Church and its part in preventing the spread of God's word play an important role in Benoist's prefaces. Both Erasmus and Benoist were keen to see reformation within the Catholic Church and the increased availability of Scriptural translations. Benoist helped to bring both about in a workable format.

When the evangelical Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples began to publish a new translation of the New Testament in response to calls from those such as Erasmus, the text showed a distinct break from the *Bible historiale*: gloss and commentary were removed, and a complete translation with no gaps envisaged.⁹¹ From the beginning, the translation was available in an octavo format, and so available to less wealthy members of the laity than the *Bible historiale*, again demonstrating that Lefèvre had been influenced by Erasmian, humanist thought in the dissemination of Scripture to the laity.⁹²

Lefèvre's prefatory material⁹³ shows a commitment to providing vernacular translations of Scripture, although, like Erasmus, his belief in the ease of understanding God's word runs against Benoist's comments. This translator would be content to see the vernacular Bible in the hands of all in an indiscriminate manner, certainly contrary to the line taken in Benoist's peritextual additions of 1579:

Et affin que ung chascun qui a congnoissance de la langue gallicane et non point du latin soit plus disposé à recevoir ceste presente grace, laquelle dieu par sa seule bonté, pitié et clemence nous presente en ce temps par le doulx et amoureux regard de Jesuchrist nostre seul sauveur, vous sont ordonnees en langue vulgaire par la grace d'iceluy les evangiles selon le latin qui se lit communement par tout sans riens y adjouster ou diminuer, affin que

⁹¹ C31, N1523col, Chambers, pp. 42-44: first publication of parts of the New Testament (Gospels and Epistles); C43, B1528-32lem, Chambers, pp. 60-62: first appearance of parts of the Old Testament (over a five-year period, excluding the Psalter (already printed)). See also Bogaert, pp. 50-65.

⁹² For influences on Lefèvre, see Bogaert, pp. 52-54.

⁹³ Prefaces to all Lefèvre's versions are found in *The Prefatory Epistles of Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples and Related Texts*, ed. by Eugene F. Rice (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972). I refer here to the 'Epistre exhortatoire' to the first part of the New Testament published in 1523 (C31, N1523col, fols a2^r-a8^r); Rice, pp. 449-56.

les simples membres du corps de Jesuchrist, ayans ce en leur langue, puissent estre aussi certains de la verité evangelique comme ceulx qui l'ont en latin.⁹⁴

Lefèvre indicates that he does not believe in providing any guidance, or any kind of additions or omissions; his text, stripped of gloss and comment, forms a sharp contrast with the heavily annotated text of Benoist. Lefèvre does however follow the Catholic line in that he states he has used the Vulgate. We have noted above Benoist's claim that he used the Vulgate in his translation and demonstrated the lack of truth in this statement by studying the errata in his editions. However, despite these embarrassing slips, Benoist does seem to confirm the authority of the Vulgate. Lefèvre asserts that he has used the Vulgate (one suspects this to be contrary to his beliefs and interest in humanist scholarship), but a member of the group involved in the process appears to have disagreed with this decision and his errata thus read in some points in a similar manner to Benoist's:

[...] en imprimant ces evangiles ceulx qui ont corrigé, ne entendans point l'intention pour laquelle ont esté transferees, ont aucunesfoys corrigé selon le grec, parquoy ont une foys ou deux plus ou moins mis que n'est contenu au latin. Et jaçoit que on ne doibve reputer ce à faulte, toutesfoys affin que ceulx qui ne entendroyent point ce ne puissent calumnier et dire que autrement est au latin, les dictz lieux seront notez cy dessoubz, affin aussi que ceulx ausquelz il plaira puissent tout avoir à l'intelligence latine. Et pareillement ont esté changez aucuns motz en imprimant desquelz usait l'exemplaire, comme *Faictes penitence* [...] ⁹⁵

On a final point, Lefèvre criticises those who want to prevent vernacular versions of the Gospels, quoting Scripture to support his point of view⁹⁶ and so, as seen in the work of Erasmus and Benoist, the Catholic Church is attacked once again in prefatory material composed by one of its own.

Lefèvre's entire Bible translation was first published in a complete form in 1530 by Martin Lempereur; by this point, printing had been transferred out of France to

⁹⁴ Rice, p. 450.

⁹⁵ Rice, pp. 455-56. This note is attributed to the publisher, Simon de Colines, by Rice (p. 455). He comments that 'this text seems to confirm L[efèvre]'s express statement that he translated from the Latin [...] and that the "corrections from the Greek" [...] were made not by L. but, as the note says, by a corrector at the press. The corrector was plausibly the young Robert Estienne' (p. 456). See also Bogaert, pp. 54-55.

⁹⁶ For example, Luke 11. 52 and Mark 16. 15. Rice, pp. 454-55.

Antwerp due to the Faculty's censorship.⁹⁷ This edition contains an increased amount of peritextual material as its title suggests;⁹⁸ Bogaert and Gilmont note the additional aids, concluding 'elle est conçue pour servir de bon instrument de travail'.⁹⁹ In the privilege granted by Emperor Charles V, the industry and cost that have gone into the work and the official approval with which it has been met by the Inquisitor of the Faith and the Louvain theologians are stressed,¹⁰⁰ striking a chord with several of Benoist's assertions.

Lefèvre's prologue extols the excellent properties of God's word, which can bring 'eternelle felicité, [...] confondent toutes erreurs et rendent leurs vrais auditeurs parfaictz, instruictz et appareillez à toute bonne oeuvre'.¹⁰¹ The superiority over human writings is stressed, and the translator rejects any gloss, even if difficulties were to exist in the text. Benoist too wants his translation to banish heretical errors and to instruct, but he would acknowledge God's continuing revelation through the Church to be equally important in forming God's word. Finally, the signs of what seems to be a growing acceptance that difficulties did indeed exist in the text perhaps led Lempereur to the addition of critical marginal notes in his 1534 Bible.¹⁰² This version therefore contains a modified prologue with a new conclusion:

Parquoy, fideles Lecteurs, recevez de la bonne part ce que nostre labour vous a voulu fidelement communiquer, desyrant principalement subvenir à ceulx qui encore sont rudes et non assez exercez en la sainte escripture, et esperant non donner empeschement aux bien instruictz, mesme de leur estre occasion de plus proffondement scruter les parolles et

⁹⁷ C51, B1530lem, Chambers, pp. 70-72.

⁹⁸ *La sainte Bible. en Francoys, translatee selon la pure et entiere traduction de saint Hierome, conferee et entierement revisitee, selon les plus anciens et plus correctz exemplaires Ou sus ung chascun Chapitre est mis brief argument, avec plusieurs figures et Histoires: aussy les Concordances en marge au dessus des estoilles, diligemment revisitees. Avec ce sont deux Tables: Lune pour les matieres des deux Testamentz: Lautre pour trouver toutes les Epistres, tant de Lancien comme du Nouveau Testament et les Evangiles, qui sont leutes en Leglise par toute Lannee: tant es Dimenches comme es jours Ferialux et Festes* (Antwerp: Lempereur, 1530).

⁹⁹ Bogaert, pp. 57-58 (p. 57).

¹⁰⁰ See Rice, p. 512; Bogaert, p. 57.

¹⁰¹ Rice, pp. 512-15 (p. 513). Rice 'tentatively' attributes the preface to Lefèvre (p. 512).

¹⁰² C62, B1534lem, Chambers, pp. 83-85. Chambers reports that Lefèvre's translation has been revised by using Robert Estienne's 1532 Latin Bible; she also notes that its 'Reformist-seeming additions' resulted in it being put on the Index of Prohibited Books in 1546 (Chambers, p. 85). See also Rice, p. 531; Bogaert, pp. 58-59.

faictz merueilleux du Seigneur, auquel Seigneur soit tout honneur, gloire, et action de graces.¹⁰³

Chambers also indicates more peritextual additions: for example, a summary of the Christian faith and a chronology from the beginning of the world to 1534.¹⁰⁴ Within a short space of time, the belief that Scripture could be presented on its own with no comment or guidance had waned and difficulties had been perceived.

Conclusion

There are evidently several themes common to Benoist's peritextual additions and those found in pre-Reformation Bibles written by those involved in the dissemination of Scripture to the laity. Sometimes Benoist and the other authors are in agreement, although on other occasions the opposite point of view is taken. Erasmus, Lefèvre and Benoist all take a critical view of the Catholic Church, but information about these theologians outside of this material indicates their desire to bring renewal to the Church rather than to break from it. It perhaps seems extraordinary that prefaces in Scriptural translations should be used in this polemical way, but all three defend their cases by fighting those who oppose vernacular Bibles, and their colleagues form one of the most important groupings opposing them and who must be persuaded to change their minds.

Of the three, Benoist appears to have the most aggressive style, perhaps due to the later date of publication: he is combatting the entrenched position of his fellow theologians as well as the Protestants, whose way had been paved by the work of Erasmus and Lefèvre. The rise of Protestantism had altered the way

¹⁰³ Rice, pp. 530-34 (p. 534). Rice comments that 'the identity of the author of the 1534 edition and of its preface remains uncertain. He was perhaps the publisher Martin de Keyser [Lempereur], who knew and admired Estienne's Latin Bible (he was to reprint it in Antwerp early in 1535), or a scholar in his employ. Possibly he was Robert Estienne himself' (p. 531).

¹⁰⁴ Chambers, p. 85. Chambers points out that these confirm the use of Estienne's Bible. See also Rice, p. 531.

issues in this area could be approached. Indeed, certain humanist and evangelical ideas were demonstrably unworkable within the Catholic Church and this was evident by the 1560s. Although Benoist's commitment to vernacular Bibles suggests his affiliation to some strands of humanist and evangelical thought, his influences also seem to stem from other pre-Reform currents evolving out of medieval trends and lay piety. In addition to this, Benoist was a Counter-Reformation theologian, who dealt with the realities of the situation of his own time.

Approximately ten years after Lefèvre's New Testament translation began to appear and four years after his complete Bible was printed, textual difficulties had already been acknowledged and marginal notes and other aids to the reader added; the principle of 'Scripture alone' had, in its purest form, ended before it had really begun. The addition of peritextual material also suggests a realisation that it was foolhardy to provide Scripture alone for the layman to interpret how he wished; he might interpret Scripture in a way which cast doubt on the doctrines of newer religious movements in the same way that he might question the traditions of the established church. Peritext gave back a certain level of control, and, on whatever level and with whatever intentions, the ability to guide and thus manipulate.

b) Protestant Bibles

By the 1550s and early 1560s, a substantial amount of peritextual material had been added to the Protestant Bible.¹⁰⁵ Amongst peritextual reader aids such as tables and maps, it is not unusual to find comment in various forms; indeed, this is located in Protestant Bibles printed before and after the middle of the century.

¹⁰⁵ See Chambers, pp. xiii-xiv. To be discussed later, under the general presentation of Bibles.

Most texts are written in French and only occasionally in Latin.¹⁰⁶ Comment usually comes in the form of a few lines of verse or prose prefaces of varying lengths addressed to the reader. A variety of people were involved in composing these texts: the prefaces of translators such as Pierre Robert Olivétan,¹⁰⁷ Jean Calvin¹⁰⁸ and Sebastien Châteillon¹⁰⁹ rank among the better-known commentaries; however, others involved in the process, such as Nicolas des Gallars, who was involved in developing marginal notes in the New Testament which were used later by Benoist, aired their concerns.¹¹⁰ Printers and publishers – the scholarly Robert Estienne is perhaps one of the most distinguished examples – also added their thoughts.¹¹¹ On occasion, the identity of the author of the text remains unknown. Many subjects are discussed and a range of views expressed. As we shall see, authors sometimes agree, but discord within the Protestant Church on the subject of God's word can at times be apparent.

Let us begin by considering attitudes expressed about the laity having access to Scripture in the vernacular. Calvin's comments can be of no surprise; the necessity of all having God's word, 'Scripture alone', was, of course, one of Calvin's fundamental beliefs. Here, in a preface preceding the New Testament of Olivétan's Bible, his feelings are made clear:

¹⁰⁶ For a Latin text, see one of Calvin's prefaces to C66, B1535win, 'Joannes Calvinus, Cesaribus [...]', fol. ♣1^v. Chambers underlines the irony to this: Calvin celebrates the vernacular Bible in a Latin preface. It was not reprinted. Chambers, p. 91.

¹⁰⁷ C66, B1535win. See, for example, 'P. Robert Olivetanus [...]', fols ♣2^{r-v}. On Olivétan's translation, see Bogaert, pp. 66-70.

¹⁰⁸ Many examples possible in French Bibles translated by Calvin or others: see C66, B1535win, 'A tous amateurs de Jesus Christ et de son evangile', fols aa1^v-aa2^v for his introduction to Olivétan's New Testament. It was reprinted up to the eighteenth century. Chambers, p. 91.

¹⁰⁹ C202, B1555chat, fols ♣2^r-♣6^r. (Three prefaces in total.)

¹¹⁰ Benoist used the annotations drawn up by the Protestants Nicolas des Gallars and Augustin Marlorat (C371, B1566nyv, Chambers, p. 366). Des Gallars, Seigneur de Saules, worked in numerous locations fulfilling a variety of roles: for example, he was a minister in Geneva (1544-57) and Paris (1557-58), and helped to reorganise the French Church in London (1560-61); he was also present at the Colloquy of Poissy. His publications include biblical commentaries, polemic and French translations of several of Calvin's works. See Mario Turchetti's entry in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, ed. by Hans J. Hillerbrand, 4 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), II, 154.

¹¹¹ For example, C261, B1560est, 'Robert Estienne a tous amateurs de la parolle de Dieu', fols ¶2^{r-v}.

L'evangile est parolle de vie et verité. C'est la puissance de Dieu au salut de tous croyans. Et la clef de la science de Dieu: qui ouvre la porte du royaume des cieulx aux fideles, les desliant de pechez: et la ferme aux incredules, les lyant en leurs pechez. Bienheureux sont tous ceulx qui l'oyent et la gardent. [...] Où est donc vostre esperance si vous contemnez et desdaignez de ouyr, veoir, lire, et retenir ce saint Evangile?¹¹²

This kind of sentiment is repeated in Calvin's preface to the 1546 Geneva Bible, which was often reprinted in Protestant Bibles; in this preface, the impact of Calvin's sustained use of images for Scripture when stressing its importance (for instance, it is described as 'la lumiere', 'l'eschole de toute sagesse', 'le miroir', 'le sceptre Royal', and 'la pasture unique de noz ames') seems to me more effective than Benoist's attempts at employing imagery in his New Testament preface.¹¹³ However, if we consider Benoist's defences as a whole, the Catholic theologian shows an equal energy and commitment to God's word in this form.

On similar lines, an early 1539 New Testament edition, which contains a significant quantity of prefatory material, supplies the rhyme headed 'Mat.[thieu] Cord.[ier] aux Lecteurs' in which all are enthusiastically exhorted to follow Christ's words and deeds:

Venez à luy, vous en pourrez jouyr:
Car pour certain il est humble et facile.
Apprenez donc par lire ou par ouyr
Le contenu de son saint Evangile.¹¹⁴

In addition to this, it contains a 'huictain' which reinforces the above ideas:

Toy qui desires au bas peché bouter,
Prendre plaisir, et d'ennuy te soubtraire:
Ce livre ly sans point t'en absenter,
Et trouveras là ou ton coeur veut traire.
Tout vice y meurt, tout profit au contraire
Y est certain, point ne t'en fault doubter.

¹¹² C66, B1535win, 'A tous amateurs de Jesus Christ et de son evangile', fol. Aa2^r. This is the preface reprinted in New Testaments up to the eighteenth century.

¹¹³ C128, B1546gir, 'Jean Calvin au Lecteur. Si je vouldis icy user de longue preface [...]', fol. a2^r. This text was reprinted until the end of the seventeenth century in Genevan, and sometimes Lyonese, copies. Chambers, p. 155.

¹¹⁴ C78, N1539[basle], 'Mat. Cord. aux Lecteurs', fol. T7^v. The rhyme has sixteen lines divided into four verses. Chambers shows that the contents of this New Testament can be found in the earlier C76, N1538mic (Chambers, p. 107).

Car verité (qui est vray exemplaire)
Cy dedens dit seulement s'arrester.¹¹⁵

The importance of all having access to God's word is stressed in numerous Protestant translations. All are in agreement within the Protestant Church: vernacular Bibles should be provided for the laity.

The way to approach the Bible is also clearly defined by Protestant translators. Châteillon addresses this in 'Le moyen pour entendre la sainte écriture':¹¹⁶ the reader must, for instance, be a true believer and approach God humbly. In Protestant prefaces, numerous comments are made as to the instruction, edification and salvation brought to the reader of the Bible, and the glory and honour rendered to God by reading the Bible. The work undertaken in bringing Scripture to the public is frequently said to be for the purposes of the glory of God and benefiting one's neighbour. In this way, those involved in disseminating Scripture are fulfilling the fundamental Christian principle of showing love to God and their fellow man. For example, in a 1568 Latin-French Bible, we find this rhyme from the printer which touches on several of these points:

Pour aider à tous ceux qui desirent entendre
L'un et l'autre langage, et quant et quant apprendre
Le chemin de salut: pour clorre aussi la bouche
Au calomniateur: et pour bailler courage
De travailler après à ceux ausquels attouche:
A la gloire de Dieu j'ay dressé cest ouvrage.¹¹⁷

Initially, the ease with which the Bible can be used is referred to. This is perhaps most memorably suggested in the preface to the Bible known as the *Bible à l'Épée* published in 1540 under the direction of those at Geneva during Calvin's absence.¹¹⁸ In the preface, written by either Antoine Marcourt or Jean Morand,¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ C78, N1539[basle], 'Huictain', fol. T8^r.

¹¹⁶ C202, B1555chat, 'Le moyen pour entendre la sainte écriture', fols ♣3^r-♣4^v (see Chambers, pp. 221-22). For a discussion of some of the prefatory material, see Bogaert, pp. 84-85.

¹¹⁷ C395, B1568bou, 'Sixain de l'imprimeur', fol. Xx6^r (fol. 126^r). On this particular Bible, see Bogaert, p. 78.

¹¹⁸ C82, B1540[gir]. The pastors concerned were Henri de la Mare, Jacques Bernard, Antoine Marcourt and Jean Morand (Chambers, pp. 109-11 (p. 110)). On the *Bible à l'Épée*, see also Bogaert, pp. 70-71.

the flourishing arts, invention of the printing press and modern weapons are used to show the intelligence of the people:

Estime-tu que ceux de maintenant soient plus rudes et moins capables d'intelligence que ceux du temps passé? Ne voys-tu point les ars flourir (graces à Dieu) plus que jamais? Voys-tu point choses tant excellentes inventées et trouvées, en ces derniers jours, qu'onques ne furent veuës? Ceste tant belle impression du livre que tu tiens t'en fera tesmoignage quant à son art: et ces machines tant vehementes, que munition n'est tant puissante que par icelles ne soit rompue, brisée et mise en pouldre, sans autres mille choses. Et d'avantaige voys-tu point les enfans, plus fins et entendantz à l'eage de six ans, que au temps passé (voyre de ta memoire) ilz n'estoient à vingt [...]?¹²⁰

Although this is far from the line adopted by Benoist, it is possibly the closest text in terms of tone. References to the printing press and modern forms of weaponry show the down-to-earth approach of the author.

However, as time passed, Protestant translators increasingly began to perceive the difficulties within the text; this was sometimes linked to the levels of understanding. The outcome was an increase in marginal notes and other reader aids. Châteillon, who produced the only genuinely independent translation of the century, saw the difficulties of both the language and the actual content of the text. In his dedication to King Henri II we find the following, describing the difficulties within Scripture:

Cête obscurité git en partie ês mots, e en partie ês matieres: dont moi qui ai beaucoup e longuement travaillé ês mots, pour profiter aucunement aux hommes s'il étoit possible, pour le moins en cête partie, ai translaté la Bible en François, le mieux, e en langage le plus propre e entendible qu'il m'a été possible. [...]

Quant a l'autre partie de l'obscurité des écrittures, laquelle j'ai ditte être ês matieres, je ne me fai pas fort d'avoir telle connoissance de l'esperit, que de la letre: toute-fois selon la grace que Dieu en traittant cêt'œuvre, m'a faite, je donnerai conseil touchant le moyen de bien entendre la sainte écritture.¹²¹

Châteillon was anxious to make the text accessible and worked on making the language of the Bible understandable. Indeed, his interests in language extended

¹¹⁹ Morand is usually named as the author: Chambers, pp. 110-11; Bogaert, p. 71.

¹²⁰ C82, B1540[gir], 'Au Lecteur fidele. Le Saint Apostre Pierre admoneste de veiller [...]', fols *2^v.

¹²¹ C202, B1555chat, 'A trespreux e tresvictorieux prince Henri de Valois [...]', fols ♣2^v.

to pioneering a new spelling system, as can be seen from the above quotation. In fact, linguistic considerations are addressed thoroughly in Châteillon's prefaces. Chambers calls 'radical understatement' his comment about some of his choices ('ceci (pense-je bien) ne plaira pas a tous') and observes that he faced heavy criticism from both Churches 'for his imaginative renderings of the Hebrew and Greek'.¹²² In addition to linguistic alterations, annotations were included for the sake of comprehension; these are discussed in prefatory material as are his attempts to avoid the fourth level of understanding, the anagogical sense.¹²³

One of the Protestant authors of Benoist's marginal notes, Nicolas des Gallars, explained the reason for his marginal notes:

Cognoissant le bon desir que plusieurs avoyent de s'avancer en la cognoissance des saintes Lettres, et y amener les autres: et que pour ce faire, ils desiroient avoir quelques briefves expositions à la marge du nouveau Testament, pour estre incontinent instruits du vray sens des passages: j'ay bien voulu obtemperer à une tant sainte affection, et m'y employer selon la mesure de grace que Dieu m'a departie. [...] depuis y ayant mis la main avec plus de loisir, je n'ay obmis à mon escient nul passage obscur, que je ne me soye efforcé de declarer le plus familierement que j'ay peu, usant de telle brieveté que la chose le requeroit. Et outre cela, en ceux qui n'estoyent pas tant difficiles, j'ay noté ce qui ne devoit estre legerement passé, ou qui pouvoit servir à l'edification du lecteur, pour le faire tant mieux prendre garde à la doctrine qui en doit estre recueillie.¹²⁴

He argues that his annotations are learning aids to help individuals extend their knowledge of Scripture and so that they may help others. Of course, Des Gallars claims to reveal the 'true' sense of the text; he will help with any difficulties and also highlight the important verses. Benoist would perhaps agree with the author of 'his' New Testament marginal notes in these aims, although the Bible should no doubt be interpreted in what he views as the true way, revealing the Catholic interpretation.

¹²² C202, B1555chat, 'Avertissement touchant cete translacion', fols ♣5^r-♣6^r (fol. ♣6^r); Chambers, p. 221.

¹²³ C202, B1555chat, 'Avertissement touchant cete translacion', fols ♣5^r-♣6^r.

¹²⁴ C264, B1560reb(fol), 'N. des Gallars, au Lecteur fidele', fol. AA1^v. This is located before the New Testament.

Other aids to help with comprehension were offered, for example in the form of tables, which could cover a range of purposes such as providing further explanations of proper nouns derived from Hebrew or Greek. In a note to the reader, one printer underlines the advantages of a table he has added. For example, ‘les plus rudes’ will be guided towards the things they most need:

Tous ceux qui auront un peu considéré quel ordre et maniere est gardée en ceste presente table, pourront cognoistre combien elle n'est point ne dommageable ne superflue, mais au contraire pleine de grande utilité. Car tant s'en fault qu'elle destourne de la lecture du texte, qu'elle ne faict que renvoyer tousjours à iceluy. Et y trouveront les plus rudes (pour lesquels principalement est faicte) une certaine adresse, qui leurs monstrera le but qui nous est proposé en toute l'Escriture, et les conduyra à tout ce que y devons chercher, et povons trouver.¹²⁵

This is found in a 1539 edition, indicating early recognition of the benefits of peritextual additions. In fact, this is the same edition in which the poem addressed from Matthieu Cordier is inserted, in which the ease of the exercise (without any aids) is suggested (see above).

The Apocrypha provided another area for guidance. Often Protestant versions separated out these books with an *advertissement* explaining the ways in which one could draw on the stories. In 1535, Olivétan wrote:

[...] ledict saint Hierosme parlant du livre de Jehudith (qui est Apocryphe) dit que l'autorité d'iceluy n'est point estimée idoine et suffisante pour confirmer les choses qui surviennent en disputation.¹²⁶ Et generalmente de tous les livres Apocryphes, dit qu'on les peult lire pour l'edification du peuple: mais non point pour vouloir corroborer l'autorité des doctrines Ecclesiasticques.¹²⁷

Certain of Benoist's comments on Tobit do not oppose this view; he stressed the moral use of it, although claimed the book as canonical.

¹²⁵ C78, N1539[basle], 'L'imprimeur au Lecteur', fol. R6^r. It appears that this text was originally found in C70, N1536[gir], although in perhaps a different state, which possibly makes the printer and thus author of the text Jean Girard (see Chambers, p. 96). The table in question directs the reader to the appropriate passage of the New Testament on a variety of subjects, which are arranged in alphabetical order.

¹²⁶ Au prologue de Jehudith. (Olivétan's note.)

¹²⁷ En lad. epistre à Chromace. (Olivétan's note.) C66, B1535win, 'Aux fideles Lecteurs', fol. AAA1^v.

As in Benoist's prefaces, humility is frequently expressed by those who (they claim) have attempted to produce a 'faithful' representation of God's word. The enormity of the work is stressed and the translator frequently claims to have done his best in what is a near impossible task. The possibility of errors is acknowledged and several translators invite corrections. Châteillon is particularly concerned about this:

Que s'ils treuvent quelque chose qui leur puisse déplaire, je les prie qu'ils me veuillent pardonner: j'ai fait ce que j'ai peu: il n'êt possible de contenter châcun, non pas a Christ même: car ce qui plait a l'un, déplait a l'autre. Que si vous trouvés quelque faute (comme je pense bien qu'il y en aura peut être plusieurs, veu que l'euvre êt si difficile e si long) pardonnés moi, e m'en avertissês amiablement [...] Car je ne veux tromper personne, s'il êt possible. E pour cête cause, combien qu'en cête besogne, j'aye par la grace de Dieu, travaillé long tems, continuellement, a grand loisir, en bonne santé, e d'un grand courage, toute-fois encore desormais (s'il plait a Dieu) si j'y trouve quelque faute, soit par avertissement d'autrui, soit autrement, je mettrai peine, Dieu aidant, de la corriger. Que s'il vient un autre translacion qui soit meilleure, j'espere que cête-ci ne sera pas marrie de lui faire place.¹²⁸

Whether such claims are genuine or not perhaps depends on the person concerned and his particular situation. Châteillon had taken what would prove controversial decisions in the language he used and perhaps an inkling of the future reaction of others affects this preface. On a related note, there is a feeling that this divine work should be worked at until it is rendered perfection itself:

Et prie Dieu qu'il donne, en si pesant affaire,
Homme qui face mieux: et t'aide à le parfaire,
Afin que nous voyons ce grand oeuvre parfait.¹²⁹

Other Bible editions are mentioned, and not necessarily in a bad light. One author enthusiastically declares 'quand il y auroit vingt fois autant de Bibles qu'il y en ha aujourd'huy, ce ne seroit pas assez'.¹³⁰ However, he is clearly keenly aware of the competition he faces when selling Bibles:

Neanmoins laissant aux autres imprimeurs leur honneur (duquel nous ne sommes point envieux) comme un chacun en particulier, et tous en general sont dignes de bonne louange

¹²⁸ C202, B1555chat, 'Avertissement touchant cête translacion', fol. ✚6^r.

¹²⁹ C395, B1568bou, 'Sonnet de l'imprimeur', fol. *6^r.

¹³⁰ C146, B1550arn, 'Aux Lecteurs. Amys lecteurs [...]', fol. A1^v. Bogaert and Gilmont reproduce some of this passage (Bogaert, p. 79).

en cest endroit: Nous vous voulons bien advertir que trouverez icy quelque chose plus que aux autres. Quant au fruit de ce que nous avons adjousté, nous vous en laissons le jugement. Voicy donc ce qui est davantage en ce present oeuvre, à savoir le troisième livre des Machabees, qui n'avoit esté encore mis en lumiere, c'est à dire, traduit en vulgaire Francois. Vous le lirez, et l'ayans leu vous nous rapporterez s'il vous plaist, si ce ha esté une chose superflue de l'adjouster.¹³¹

This printer thus invites feedback from customers, asking whether they like his innovation. Publishers were aware of their rivals and kept an eye on profit margins. Apart from this expansion of the Bible and thus what we could call a 'textual addition', peritextual additions were used to boost sales figures and give publishers the edge over competitors; these peritextual additions were often signalled in the title.¹³²

The Genevan pastors were unhappy with the publication of large numbers of different Bibles, above all independent versions over which they had no control, such as Châteillon's.¹³³ This led to a notable example of those on the Protestant side of the religious divide exploiting the Bible preface as an opportunity to air grievances. The pastors seemed to adopt the view that the laity was allowed the Bible as long as the format remained under their control. They claim that an accurate, authoritative text is needed to prevent scenes recreating the Tower of Babel and that Châteillon is an instrument of Satan:

Car il n'y a rien plus requis pour avoir une droicte et ferme cognoissance de la doctrine de salut, avec seur moyen de resister à toute heresie et faulseté, que d'avoir le texte de l'Escripture sainte fidelement traduit, puis qu'ainsi est que le peché des hommes a introduict au monde une telle diversité de langages. [...] Satan nostre ancien adversaire, voyant qu'il ne peut plus empescher le cours de la parolle de Dieu, comme il a faict pour un temps, nous assault par un autre moyen non moins dangereux. Car au lieu qu'un temps a esté qu'il n'y avoit point de translation Française de l'Ecriture, au moins qui meritast ce nom, maintenant Satan a trouvé autant de translateurs qu'il y a d'esprits legers et outrecuidez, qui manient les Escritures: et trouvera encores desormais de plus en plus, si

¹³¹ C146, B1550am, 'Aux Lecteurs. Amys lecteurs [...]', fol. A1^v. It has been suggested that Michel Servetus may have translated III Maccabees (Chambers, p. 171); for more on this Apocryphal book, see Bogaert, p. 79.

¹³² Chambers dryly remarks of a Genevan Bible: 'The title page phraseology reveals the ever-increasing concern of publishers to furnish readers with a maximum number of aids to understanding and, not incidentally, to make a sales pitch for their own product' (C253, B1559bar-cou, Chambers, p. 258); Bogaert and Gilmont perceive too the increase in peritext in Genevan Bibles and attribute the phenomenon to the desire to make the book appear original and thus sell better (Bogaert, p. 82).

¹³³ On the acrimony surrounding Châteillon's Bible, see Bogaert, pp. 85-86.

Dieu n'y pourvoit par sa grace. Si on en demande quelque exemple, nous en produirons un qui servira pour plusieurs, c'est à sçavoir la translation de la Bible Latine et François mise en avant par Sebastian Chastillon, homme si bien cogneu en ceste Eglise tant par son ingratitude et impudence, que par la peine qu'on a perdue après luy pour le reduire au bon chemin [...]¹³⁴

This is not the only inter-Protestant conflict, as Chambers indicates. For example, the preface of a 1560 Bible betrays the signs of a clash between an author and a publisher who, it seems, has pirated his text.¹³⁵ However, Protestants are united in their opposition of Catholic 'heretics'. In language strongly reminiscent of that employed by Benoist, Protestant translators argue that Scripture has been hidden and corrupted and that parts of the Bible provide essential 'armes'; we see these arguments used from the 1530s and in the first French Protestant Bible.¹³⁶

It is perhaps appropriate that we should end a consideration of the similarities of the concerns of Protestant translators with those of Benoist by looking at Nicolas des Gallars' comments. In fact, his preface shows several points in common with Benoist's work and aims: as seen above, he added marginal notes to aid the reader to find the 'true' meaning of Scripture, which Benoist adopted and adapted; he aims to provide annotations as a digest of other works from his colleagues on Scripture;¹³⁷ he shows a certain amount of humility in his work. As

¹³⁴ C261, B1560est, 'A tous fideles Chrestiens [...]', fol. kkk1^v. This precedes the New Testament. On this Bible and its prefaces: Chambers, pp. 264-66 (p. 266); Bogaert, pp. 73-74.

¹³⁵ C264, B1560reb(fol), 'A tous vrais amateurs de la parole de Dieu', fol. *3^v. Chambers puts forwards the names of Nicolas des Gallars, Augustin Marlorat, Antoine Rebul, or Robert or Henri Estienne for the wronged author and proposes Nicolas Barbier as a possibility for the publisher (Chambers, p. 271).

¹³⁶ Calvin's 1535 New Testament preface alludes to the wrongs inflicted on Scripture: 'Et pourtant tous et toutes qui portons le nom de Chrestiens et Chrestiennes, nous laisserons nous ravir, cacher, et corrompre ce Testament? lequel si justement nous appartient, sans lequel ne povons pretendre aucun droict au royaume de Dieu, sans lequel nous ignorons les grandz biens et promesses que Jesus Christ nous a faictes, la gloire et la beatitude qu'il nous a preparée?' (C66, B1535win, 'A tous amateurs de Jesus Christ et de son evangile', fol. aa2^r); 'Armes': 'Et davantage on en recevra une utilité qui est aujourd'hui bien necessaire, c'est qu'un chascun trouvera icy armes et defenses pour resister aux heretiques, ennemys et adversaires de la Parolle de Dieu, et les renger à l'obeyssance du seul Seigneur, auquel il nous fault tous obeïr' (C78, N1539[basle], 'L'imprimeur au Lecteur', fol. R6^r). The author of this text is dealing with the advantages of the table that has been added here (see note 125 above); for instance, it directs the reader to important parts of the New Testament. The 'en' and 'utilité' thus refer to the table and 'icy' and 'armes et defenses' to Scriptural passages.

¹³⁷ Benoist provided a work at the back of his 1566 Bible (the *Exposition et resolution de certains principaux passages tant du Vieil que du Nouveau Testament, desquelz les heretiques de ce temps*

the following quotation demonstrates, he was also very concerned to combat various forms of heretical speculations relating to Scripture and saw his work as instrumental in combatting Satan's intermediaries:

[...] il se faut bien donner garde des esprits curieux qui ne font que voltiger, s'esgarans en belles speculations, lesquelles n'ont rien de ferme ni arrêté. Semblablement, de ceux qui tordent la sainte Escriture à leur poste, et en veulent faire un nez de cire, se moquans de Dieu et de toute religion: comme on void en la plus part des supposts de l'Antechrist, et autres faux docteurs, qui ne cherchent qu'à aneantir la verité. Pour bien estre munis contre telles pestes, il n'y a autre moyen que d'avoir la vraye intelligence des saintes Escritures, lesquelles seules suffisent pour abatre le regne de Satan, avec toutes ses illusions.¹³⁸

The lines which follow those above conclude the preface and show the evolution in thought which has taken place since Lefèvre's time. Humanists and evangelicals stressed the ease with which one could approach Scripture and at first seemed ready to present the Bible without comments, explanations or guidance. By this later point, Protestants had realised the problems caused by independent interpretation and Des Gallars seems cautious about allowing this:

Mais pour icelle obtenir, il y faut proceder en reverence, crainte, et sobriété: sans trop attribuer à nostre sens, usant des moyens que Dieu à departis à son Eglise, voire si nous desirons d'estre enseignez interieurement par l'onction de grace, laquelle il a promise aux siens. Dont je le prie vous faire tellement participans, que vous croissiez en toute intelligence, instruction, et sagesse: et que ce petit labeur qui vous est présenté, vous incite, à chercher de plus en plus la lumiere, laquelle seule nous peut conduire au droit chemin, et mener à vie eternelle.¹³⁹

Conclusion

To conclude briefly, there are several similar themes to those found in Benoist's work. It is particularly interesting to see the same lines of argumentation and vocabulary recycled by Benoist – although turned on their head – to attack Protestant 'heresy' and interpretations. After a relatively short period of time, Protestants came to see the advantages to be gained from controlling the output of

abusent contre la foy catholique, et la verité de l'Evangile) to combat heretical interpretations: it systematically works through 'problematic' passages and gives the Catholic explanation (and thus a digest of traditional Catholic views) of passages of the Bible. See note 242 below.

¹³⁸ C264, B1560reb(fol), 'N. des Gallars, au Lecteur fidele', fol. AA1^v.

God's word. They wanted to ensure the reader interpreted it in the manner which would suit their doctrines and would steer the reader in the direction they saw as appropriate; they did this through various peritextual additions. Peritextual material was also present in some Bibles, especially in those of the 1550s and 1560s, due to more mercenary motives and concern over profit margins. The proliferation of Bibles towards the middle of the century meant loss of control, both in terms of peritextual arrangements and in the choice of translation; control was eventually reasserted by the appearance of the authoritative 1588 Genevan Bible.¹⁴⁰

c) The Catholic Bible

The peritextual material included in Catholic French Bibles dating from both before and after the publication of Benoist's has several points in common with that found in Benoist's work: if we examine the preface to the 1550 Louvain Bible, it reveals orthodox Catholic anxieties about various editions of Scripture in circulation, including vernacular Bibles, which, to some extent, are echoed in Benoist's texts; if we then turn to the peritextual additions of the Catholic Bible translations that followed Benoist's, their inclusion and contents appear to be influenced by the reception given to Benoist's work. Let us now look at these areas in further detail.

Nicolas de Leuze's preface to the 1550 Louvain Bible has several points of comparison with Benoist's texts.¹⁴¹ First of all, heretics are accused of corrupting Scripture.¹⁴² In addition to this, the difficulties of the text are stressed and levels

¹³⁹ C264, B1560reb(fol), 'N. des Gallars, au Lecteur fidele', fol. AA1^v.

¹⁴⁰ For charts demonstrating the explosion in production of Scriptural translations, see Bogaert, p. 102; on the 1588 Genevan Bible (C515-18, B1588geneve(fol), B1588geneve(4°/1), B1588geneve(4°/2) and B1588geneve(8°) respectively), see Bogaert, pp. 74-76.

¹⁴¹ C145, B1550gra-ber-wae, 'Au fidele, humble, et devot Liseur, Maistre Nicolas de Leuze [...]', fols ♣2^v-♣3^f. On the 1550 Louvain Bible, see Bogaert, pp. 87-91.

¹⁴² 'Aucuns inventeurs de recents erreurs, et susciteurs d'antiques, y avoient semé la faulxe herbe parmy le pur froument: dont issoit une puanteur d'heresie, empoisonnante les coeurs fideles

of understanding discussed; De Leuze makes it clear that mysteries exist within Scripture and that levels of understanding such as the allegorical and anagogical cannot legitimately be penetrated by one and all. Indeed, he laments that

gens mechaniques, comme foulons, tisserans, massons, charpentiers, marchans, et autres qui d'aventure ne sçavent lire ne escrire, veullent juger de la tressainte et tresparfonde Theologie, et sur icelle donner leur opinion, en pervertissant souventesfois la vraie intelligence du texte, et l'entendans selon l'affection charnelle, dont plusieurs heresies, opinions, dissensions, et mouvementz sourdent en la foy catholique.¹⁴³

De Leuze underlines the principle that the Church must be there to provide a guiding hand; only those with a certain type of learning and grace can interpret Scripture. According to De Leuze, God's word is to be distributed amongst the masses by priests in the same manner as the disciples handed out bread and fish to the five thousand.¹⁴⁴ Marginal notes are provided which confirm Church tradition and confound heretics:

A ceste raison, pour plus amplement subvenir aux simples gens, avons mis en marge de la Bible quelques matieres, comme celles qui touchent la foy, les oeuvres, les saintz sacrementz de nostre mere sainte eglise, à fin que voyent les vulgaires, où sont fondées telles choses, et n'en ayent quelque doubte, et ne se laissent abuser de gents heretiques, opiniastres: lesquelz, comme ainsy soit, qu'ilz soient pervertiz, tenuz captifz, et menez du diable, rendent aussy peine pour amener autres en telz erreurs, et damnation perpetuelle.¹⁴⁵

It is also made clear that the clergy and Church traditions must be obeyed; Scripture alone is not enough.

et catholiques' (C145, B1550gra-ber-wae, 'Au fidele, humble, et devot Liseur, Maistre Nicolas de Leuze', fol. ✚2^v); De Leuze has here just referred to the good work carried out by the Louvain theologians in producing the new Latin edition commissioned by Emperor Charles V.

¹⁴³ C145, B1550gra-ber-wae, 'Au fidele, humble, et devot Liseur, Maistre Nicolas de Leuze', fol. ✚2^v.

¹⁴⁴ C145, B1550gra-ber-wae, 'Au fidele, humble, et devot Liseur, Maistre Nicolas de Leuze', fol. ✚3^r.

¹⁴⁵ C145, B1550gra-ber-wae, 'Au fidele, humble, et devot Liseur, Maistre Nicolas de Leuze', fol. ✚3^r. In fact, I find very little added in terms of annotation. I have examined several books of this Bible, in particular Romans and James and their passages dealing with faith and works, and the Gospels and their passages relating to the Last Supper. There is a biblical concordance provided, and, in places, some explanation, but compared to Benoist's margins, De Leuze's are relatively empty. It seems to me that more guidance is provided by the fairly short chapter summaries. These were translated from the Latin Bible by François de Larben, as De Leuze indicates towards the beginning of his preface (see also Bogaert, p. 90).

Although the above are more extreme than Benoist's views – and in fact provide the arguments against vernacular Bibles – several similarities still exist. Furthermore, De Leuze's preface opens by drawing attention to the fact that the work bears an official stamp of approval: Emperor Charles V is named as being the force behind the initiative, which is being carried out by certain of the theologians at Louvain.¹⁴⁶ This serves to legitimatise the project. Benoist's 1566 Bible begins with the King's privilege and in his 1568 extended *advertissement*, he mentions that the Louvain theologians have approved his work.

Following Plantin's 1578 French Bible, which, as we have seen above, used the Benoist Bible, numerous Catholic editions followed, printed in Lyons and Rouen and, eventually, Paris.¹⁴⁷ The peritext to these Catholic editions often betrays a small number of overriding preoccupations: the Vulgate is claimed as the source of the translation; the legitimacy and approved status of the vernacular Bible in question are underlined; it is made clear that the particular Bible concerned is not heretical in any way; finally, its use (for example, against heretics) is highlighted. Short texts in Latin or French testifying to one or several of these points can frequently be found inserted around Catholic Bibles, and they are often authored by Louvain theologians. Several of the texts are recycled in Bibles dating from the last decades of the sixteenth century. They are sometimes found in Catholic New Testaments; as noted previously, Plantin republished Benoist's New Testament as early as 1567.¹⁴⁸ By looking at the peritext to one New Testament and two Bibles, concerns lying behind the additions can be amply demonstrated.

Let us firstly turn to Plantin's first edition of the 'Louvain New Testament', published in 1573; although this is based on Benoist's work, the title-page has

¹⁴⁶ Imperial privilege: C145, B1550gra-ber-wae, 'L'extraict du privilege', fol. ♣2^r. For further details of imperial involvement, see Bogaert, pp. 88-89.

¹⁴⁷ See Bogaert, pp. 98-101.

¹⁴⁸ An excellent account of the history of sixteenth-century Catholic New Testaments and Bibles following the publication of Benoist's can be found in Bogaert, pp. 93-101. This also provides a comprehensive survey of the different peritextual additions found in these works, in terms of authors, objectives, and the publishers who used them.

been stripped of his name and his marginal notes have disappeared.¹⁴⁹ Indeed, the title claims that this translation came from the pens of Louvain theologians. It includes a short Latin text signed ‘J. Molanus, Apostolicus et Regius librorum visitator’, approving the contents, which he asserts have been corrected by Louvain theologians and are of great use.¹⁵⁰ In addition to this, Plantin includes the ‘approbation’ first seen in his 1567 New Testament; this comes from four different Louvain theologians.¹⁵¹ Jean Henten, who ‘corrected’ the 1567 New Testament according to its title-page, declares:

Ceste Bible traduite en François selon la version commune, avec toutes les annotations comme elles sont remises ou corrigees, se peut fort bien imprimer, et à grande utilité de tous catholiques, et confusion des heretiques, d’ont j’en donne bon tesmoignage l’ayant tout bien leuë et examiné.¹⁵²

Michaël de Bay then endorses Henten’s work in a short statement in Latin, as do Judocus Tiletanus and Augustinus Hunaeus; the date of 1567 remains.

If we now turn to Plantin’s 1578 ‘Louvain Bible’ (again based on Benoist’s work, yet with his name and notes omitted), it contains Molanus’ 1572 ‘approbation’ at the conclusion of the work. Although still dated 1572, the ‘approbation’ now approves the whole Bible and not merely the New Testament.¹⁵³ At the beginning, a Latin preface has been added by Jacobus de Bay, dated 1572 and addressed from Louvain.¹⁵⁴ This was still being reprinted in Bibles at the end of the century; for instance, it was in the second Bible of interest here, a 1599 Lyons Bible.¹⁵⁵ Issues touched on relate to the Council of Trent, the Vulgate, the French Bible, the work of the Louvain theologians, and the role played by Plantin.¹⁵⁶ The 1599 Lyons Bible (also a ‘Louvain Bible’ from its title) is in many respects a

¹⁴⁹ C430-31 (N1573pla(1) and N1573pla(2)). Plantin’s 1567 New Testament (C385, N1567pla) contained annotations and Benoist’s name in the title-page.

¹⁵⁰ C431, N1573pla(2), [Approbation], fol. GG8^r (p. 847). See Bogaert, p. 95.

¹⁵¹ See Bogaert, p. 93.

¹⁵² C431, N1573pla(2), ‘L’approbation’, fol. cc7^r.

¹⁵³ C439, B1578pla, ‘Approbatio’, fol. X6^r.

¹⁵⁴ C439, B1578pla, ‘Jacobus de Bay Lectori S.’, fol. †2^r. See also Bogaert, pp. 97-98. J. de Bay was the nephew of M. de Bay mentioned above (Bogaert, p. 97).

¹⁵⁵ C542, B1599-98jul, fol. †2^r.

¹⁵⁶ See Bogaert, pp. 97-98.

copy of an earlier Lyonese Louvain Bible put out by a different publishing house in 1581;¹⁵⁷ three French texts are provided which first appeared in the 1581 Bible, all dated 1581 from Lyons.¹⁵⁸ Jacques Maistret, Jacques Perier and Estienne de la Barge, ecclesiastics with at least one post in Lyons, approve the work, confirming that the contents are approved, Catholic and useful.¹⁵⁹ Maistret states of the Bible: ‘nous n’avons rien trouvé qui ne soit bon et Catholique, et veritablement traduite pour l’utilité des Chrestiens.’¹⁶⁰ To conclude, Estienne de la Barge follows the model set by the others:

Nous Estienne de la Barge, Archidiacre, Comte et Chanoine de l’Eglise de Lyon, Vicaire general, et Official Primatial au diocese et ressort de la province dudict Lyon, en consequence de la certification cy devant approuvee par R. Pere en Dieu, Messire Jacques Maistret, Evesque de Damas, et Suffragant audict diocese de Lyon, et de Religieuse personne Frere Jacques Perier, de l’ordre des freres Prescheurs, tous deux Docteurs en la Theologie de Paris, attestant qu’en la traduction de la presente Bible, reveuë et corrigee par les Docteurs en Theologie de Louvain, imprimee à Anvers, par Christophle Plantin en l’an 1578. n’y a chose quelconque repugnante, ou contraire aux constitutions et traditions de nostre Mere sainte Eglise, Catholique Apostolique et Romaine, ne pareillement en la Table d’icelle, traduite par M. Jean Harlemius, aussi Docteur en Theologie, de la Societé des Jesuistes, accordons et approuvons la reimpression d’icelle. Faict à Lyon le 21. Decembre, 1581.

E. DE LA BARGE, Vicaire general.

Ever cautious, the Bible ends with the words of Molanus, referred to above. These precautions seem to be in response to the hostile manner which greeted Benoist’s Bible. The publishers and ‘translators’ are determined to prove legitimacy and this is not achieved by the many arguments of one determined translator as with Benoist, but by the weight afforded by the approval of many theologians whose credentials cannot be doubted.

¹⁵⁷ C467, B1582-81pil. See Chambers, p. 504; Bogaert, pp. 98-101 (pp. 99-100).

¹⁵⁸ See Bogaert, p. 99.

¹⁵⁹ C542, B1599-98jul, ‘Approbation des docteurs’, fol. †8^v.

¹⁶⁰ It has been pointed out that Maistret had earlier been involved in sending the dossier on Benoist and his Bible to Rome (Bogaert, p. 99).

Conclusion

Translators, revisers, publishers and printers of both confessions made good use of the opportunity to voice their concerns in the peritext surrounding their New Testaments and Bibles. Prefatory material could be an arena for polemical point-scoring against the Church considered to be heretical or for personal vendettas to be played out in, such as with the Genevan pastors and Châteillon. It could provide room for the portrayal of the translator's Church's point of view on the status of Scripture, the Vulgate, the ease or difficulty of the text, and the levels at which the text could be understood by the laity. Prefatory material might include personal opinions and reveal the author's own style and concerns in addition to the 'company' line. Exhortations could be of a spiritual nature and made eloquently or in a down-to-earth manner. An eye might be on market rivals and sales. The frailty of mankind confronted by a seemingly impossible task was sometimes mentioned by the translator and embarrassing human slips could be betrayed in the peritextual material, usually in the errata. If Catholic, the legitimacy of the existence of the work might be questioned by one's colleagues and attempts made to reinforce its claims with various seals of approval. Material might appear only once, although some prefaces were recycled and reused beyond the sixteenth century. In general, the folio 'landmark' texts contain much that is of interest. On the Protestant side, Olivétan, the pioneer, Châteillon, the independent translator, and the 1588 'authoritative' text of the Genevan pastors provide large amounts of material. In Catholic versions, De Leuze, Benoist and Plantin, all firsts in different ways, include revealing texts. Whatever the literary abilities of the author, the prefaces usually show the engagement of the producers of the text with the masses for whom the book is destined.

The diversity of prefatory material shown in this small survey goes some way to demonstrating the individuality possible in sixteenth-century French Bibles. They bore the (sometimes) unique mark of those who produced them. When examined, Chambers' 554 editions display a rich diversity. However, by the end of the

century, the Church pastors in Geneva had realised the disadvantages of this and the advantages in controlling and suppressing the proliferation of texts. All were encouraged to have the Bible in the vernacular, but only as long as it was in a form approved by them. It is ironic that Benoist, a Catholic theologian and polemicist combatting Protestant ‘heresy’ and Bibles, should in some ways agree with this and should attempt to use the fruits of their endeavours against them. In time, those resisting change in the Catholic Church in France seem to have been forced to acknowledge the practicality behind this view. Plantin and theologians from outside Paris ensured the fusion of Catholic and Protestant scholarship; the momentum created initially by Benoist proved impossible to resist.

Let us conclude this section with a very brief summary of what this survey of peritextual additions has demonstrated regarding Benoist and the French-language Bible: Benoist appears to have been influenced by comments emanating from members of pre-Reform movements who believed in Scriptural translations; he then reacted to the work of Protestants, using their scholarship and ideas both in terms of the Protestant Bible’s text and peritext; finally, his work exerted a profound influence on the Catholic French Bibles which followed his, both in their text and peritext.

III) Benoist’s 1566 Bible: presentation and further peritextual influences

We have discussed previously the sources of the translation and marginal notes used in Benoist’s first French Bible. We now turn to examine the possible sources of other features of the 1566 Bible, namely the general presentation of various elements within the Bible and the inclusion of certain contents other than the Scriptural translation.

Let us firstly distinguish the different elements drawn together in a Bible dating from the 1560s. As mentioned previously, in the 1550s, the number of reader aids in Genevan Bibles began to escalate; these were reproduced in one form or another in numerous Bibles of the early 1560s. Within the text of the Bible itself, verses were numbered¹⁶¹ and book summaries ('arguments'), chapter summaries ('sommaries') and marginal notes (perhaps encompassing a biblical concordance, etymological and historical explanation, and comment on doctrinal points triggered by the text) often appeared.¹⁶² Various texts (prefaces included), indices, charts and maps were also added.¹⁶³ Illustrations had been present in the first *Bible historique*, but, as Francis Higman has demonstrated, in the later Genevan Bibles, the illustrator strived for scientific precision, as opposed to the illustrator of, say, Lempereur's 1530 Bible, who aimed to stimulate the imagination of the reader.¹⁶⁴ It is important to recall that at this period there was no authoritative text; several or all of the above might be included in a Genevan Bible. Lyonesse Bibles might have certain of these peritextual elements, whilst suppressing others which seemed overtly Protestant; if the religious and political situation were tense, caution had to be exerted and the edition given a more 'approved' look to avoid censure.¹⁶⁵ There was no fixed form in which the majority of these elements would appear, particularly in the earlier stages of their development; further down the line, some features became fixed.¹⁶⁶ Finally, when looking at a Bible, we might notice details not related to but affecting the above reader aids, such as the layout of the text (size and typeface) and the use of decorative or historiated initials.

Chambers points to the irony in the augmentation of reader aids: in many ways, the Genevan Bibles started 'to resemble those medieval Bibles laden down with

¹⁶¹ Robert Estienne brought about this practice in French Bibles from the beginning of the 1550s. Bogaert, pp. 72-73.

¹⁶² Chambers, pp. xiii-xiv; Higman, 'Présentation typographique', p. 576.

¹⁶³ Chambers, p. xiv; Higman, 'Présentation typographique', p. 576.

¹⁶⁴ Higman, 'Présentation typographique', pp. 576-77; see also Bogaert, p. 73.

¹⁶⁵ See Chambers, p. xiii.

¹⁶⁶ For example, on the 'sommaries', see Chambers, p. xiii.

glosses, which the Reformers had so vehemently rejected'.¹⁶⁷ Concurring with our findings earlier in this chapter, Higman concludes that the Genevans were happy to promote the concept of the individual reading Scripture, so long as it was under their control:

L'accumulation des aides à la lecture vise une compréhension 'correcte' du texte: une exclusion des images-à-faire-rêver, une bonne lecture historique, avec cartes, tables et illustrations 'scientifiques' à l'appui, des éléments de commentaire dans les annotations; plus tout le nécessaire pour l'enseignement, et le culte, réformés.¹⁶⁸

We might expect to find a substantial amount of peritext in larger folio copies, where space was not at such a premium; however, as has been observed elsewhere, large quantities of additional material could be found in smaller editions that everybody could afford.¹⁶⁹ It has been argued that these reader aids formed the solution to problems arising from the lack of pastors available to be sent to France; this type of Bible was turned into a 'Bible encyclopédique', a distance-learning tool.¹⁷⁰ The material started to disappear from the Genevan Bible in the mid-1560s.¹⁷¹

If we now turn our attention back to Benoist's 1566 Bible, which contains many of the peritextual additions mentioned above, Chambers indicates that Benoist drew on various Protestant Bibles for these:

¹⁶⁷ Chambers, p. xiii.

¹⁶⁸ Higman, 'Présentation typographique', pp. 579-80. Earlier in this study, our attention is drawn to the fact that the reader is guided to the historical and literal level of understanding by these aids ('le lecteur est invité à se pencher sur la *vérité historique* du livre, non sur les interprétations allégoriques du texte' (p. 576)). This kind of restriction was not what Erasmus and Lefèvre had envisaged.

¹⁶⁹ Higman, 'Présentation typographique', p. 580 (see also p. 575). Higman's conclusions stem from a study of C253, B1559bar-cou, an in-octavo edition. Of course, smaller copies also had the benefit of being safer: they were harder to detect (*The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, I, 166).

¹⁷⁰ Higman, 'Présentation typographique', p. 580.

¹⁷¹ Chambers suggests that this could be connected with Calvin's death (Chambers, p. xiv). Higman claims there was a reaction against large numbers of annotations in the early 1560s, particularly by the Catholics, although I am unsure as to which works Higman is referring here; he notes Benoist's use of Protestant annotations and the lack of them in subsequent Catholic Bibles (Higman, 'Présentation typographique', p. 579). Could the lack of marginal notes on both sides be a reaction to Benoist's use of them?

Benoist version (first edition): an amalgam of nearly all earlier revisions, with greatest dependence on B1562bar-cou for text and ‘arguments’ (book summaries), on B1562ana for chapter summaries; marginal notes draw on the Genevans Des Gallars and Marlorat (cf. B1562bar-cou, B1563per), with some new additions lambasting ‘les heretiques’.¹⁷²

She also shows that Benoist recycled some texts acceptable to the Catholic Church, whilst taking several directly from Genevan Bibles, although sometimes modifying them.¹⁷³ We have already seen that Benoist himself claimed to use a single Protestant Bible and to have written on top of it.¹⁷⁴ If this was the case, book summaries were obtained from another source, as were some of the supplementary texts.¹⁷⁵

Let us momentarily leave these questions to one side. Whatever the exact sources, we can be sure that Benoist used Protestant scholarship. Moreover, if we examine the Protestant Bible published in Lyons by Sébastien Honorat in 1566,¹⁷⁶ a market rival to the Benoist Bible, it seems that Benoist, or his printer or publisher, used a Protestant Bible on which to model the layout of the Bible. We have noted above the number of different peritextual elements found in a Bible of the 1560s; these elements were not found in a homogeneous state and appeared in various layouts. The Lyonese Bible resembles the Benoist Bible in several important features in format and contents; it seems to be similar to the Benoist Bible in too many ways for mere coincidence.

If we compare the two folio Bibles, they resemble each other in numerous ways.¹⁷⁷ Firstly, the title-pages are much the same. For example, the title (‘La Sainte/Sainte Bible’) is emboldened, in a similar size, position and typeface.

¹⁷² Chambers, p. 366.

¹⁷³ Chambers, p. 367.

¹⁷⁴ Benoist, *Declaration*, pp. 7-9. The edition referred to is C264, B1560reb(fol). Chédozeau is wary of the *Declaration* which was printed after Benoist’s death; he believes that the Faculty of Theology might have been responsible for it (Chédozeau, p. 156, n. 79).

¹⁷⁵ C264, B1560reb(fol) does not contain book summaries, nor does it have some of the peritextual material such as the ‘Description des anneés [...]’ found in Benoist’s Bible.

¹⁷⁶ C366, B1566hon. The British Library’s copy belonged to Queen Elizabeth I.

¹⁷⁷ The following list is not exhaustive, but is indicative of the type and extent of the similarities of the two versions.

They contain similar peritextual material in content and layout.¹⁷⁸ There is an undeniable likeness in content and presentation of the New Testament marginal notes.¹⁷⁹ Both Bibles have letters of the alphabet to denote explanations and numbers for the concordance; they often have exactly the same biblical cross-reference at the same point. In the New Testament, there is often the same explanatory annotation.¹⁸⁰ If there is a note in Benoist's Gospel translation, there is usually one (frequently the same, word for word) in the Protestant Bible. For example, if we open the Bibles at the beginning of Matthew, many notes appear to match exactly in Matthew 1, 2 and 3 and have the same letter of the alphabet heading each note. Sometimes, Benoist has added an extra marginal note pointedly attacking heretics or their interpretation of the verse. If this is the case, the note is introduced with a symbol such as a cross or asterisk. If we consider the chapter summaries, they are similar in several New Testament books. Furthermore, both Bibles contain identical illustrations in several places.¹⁸¹ A casual reader could be forgiven for mistaking the identity of either Bible for that of the other, even though on closer inspection, there are differences. For instance, some Old Testament book summaries are different (for example, Genesis is different; Judges is identical), the Old Testament and Apocrypha annotations differ, and in addition, the Apocrypha is not separated by Benoist as it is in the Protestant work. On a final note, New Testament book summaries differ.

Is the number of similarities repeated if we examine other Bibles of roughly the same era? Judging from the eighty or so that I have seen, the answer to this seems to be no. There are other folio editions from Geneva and Lyons which share some

¹⁷⁸ This can be ascertained by examining Chambers' bibliography. For example, they both contain 'La Somme de tout ce que nous enseigne la sainte Esriture du Vieil et Nouveau Testament', 'Interpretation des noms [...]', 'Description des annees depuis la creation du monde [...]', 'L'Estat des Juifs sous la monarchie des Romains [...]', 'Table des tesmoignages [...]' and 'Recueil d'aucuns mots [...]'.

¹⁷⁹ According to Chambers' entries, the sources of the notes of Honorat's 1566 Bible include a 1563 Bible (C308, B1563per) published by François Perrin in Geneva. Benoist's Bible annotations also derive at least in part from the same source.

¹⁸⁰ If we follow Chambers' entries, the marginal notes used by Benoist were expanded over several years and appear in various forms in different Bibles and so this is significant.

likenesses with Benoist's Bible, but they contain far fewer similarities. The title-page of several Bibles by the Lyons-based printer Jean de Tournes appears to be the only other to resemble Benoist's title-page that I have seen.¹⁸² No other Bible consulted has the same number of identical illustrations.¹⁸³ Some carry a picture or pictures depicting the same object or objects, but they are not usually identical. Of course, Bibles which share the same source for their marginal notes as Benoist's carry similar notes in the New Testament, but they appear to differ in other ways. In fact, there are few editions of the Bible which carry such a vast number of notes. No Bible that I have consulted appears to carry the same Old Testament marginal notes. Honorat's, as mentioned above, differ also, suggesting that Benoist possibly wrote these himself. Most importantly, no other Bible has the same kind of similar physical appearance. To have the quantity of peritextual additions encountered in these two versions and the high incidence of near-identical material is out of the ordinary. Finally, of all the Bibles consulted, two others were found which shared a fairly high incidence of similarity. These were Bibles dating from 1565 and 1580.¹⁸⁴ The latter, according to Chambers, has its roots firmly in the former. The 1565 edition has its roots in B1563per, the Bible also mentioned under the entries to the two 1566 Bibles in question.¹⁸⁵ However, the 1565 and 1580 Bibles do not resemble the Benoist Bible physically.

It therefore seems more than coincidence that the 1566 Benoist Bible and 1566 Honorat Bible bear a striking similarity to each other. The answer to why this should be perhaps lies with Benoist's publishers or printers. The publication of

¹⁸¹ C366, B1566hon has slightly more woodcuts than C373, B1566che, though. Woodcut illustrations are sometimes but not always identical.

¹⁸² For example, see C191, B1554tou. The attractive presentation of Jean de Tournes' Bibles has been praised; one commentator called C153, B1551tou 'sans doute la plus belle qui existe' (Orentin Douen, cited in Chambers, p. 177).

¹⁸³ The two Bibles published by Jean de Tournes indicated in the note above have a small number of illustrations which appear to be identical to those of Benoist's 1566 Bible; they also contain other illustrations which are not the same as Benoist's.

¹⁸⁴ C350, B1565est and C447, B1580sto.

¹⁸⁵ C308, B1563per. This ever-present edition draws on several sources (B1561reb,bad, N1554bad, N1551[gir], B1562ana, N1561[cle], and B1560reb(fol)).

Benoist's Bible was shared between four Catholic publishers working in Paris:¹⁸⁶ as three out of four were 'libraires-jurés' during the League it seems unlikely that they were tainted by Protestantism.¹⁸⁷ On the other hand, Honorat was most definitely Reformist: he was a member of the Reformed consistory in Lyons.¹⁸⁸ Benoist's publishers and printers would not have been familiar with the printing of vernacular Bibles; no complete French Bible had ever been published in Paris due to the censorship of the Faculty of Theology and so they would have had to look elsewhere for a printing model. Their model may have been the Lyons Bible, or possibly one which I have not been able to trace on which both 1566 Bibles were modelled.¹⁸⁹

If the above did happen, it is difficult to say to what extent Benoist would have been involved in the proceedings. He perhaps handed the raw material for a Bible to his publishers and they might have added book summaries (these were not of course in the Bible he claimed to have used) or other elements from one or multiple sources. They then possibly put the Bible together in the manner of their vernacular model. It is clear that not only in general, but also in the specific, Benoist's first Bible fits into the Protestant tradition of French Bibles in terms of content and presentation.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁶ Gabriel Buon, Nicolas Chesneau, Michelle Guillard and Sébastien Nyvelle. It is likely that Buon printed the 1568 Bible; his monogram is reproduced throughout (Chambers, p. 392). Bogaert and Gilmont believe that Buon probably printed both editions (Bogaert, p. 94).

¹⁸⁷ Buon, Chesneau and Nyvelle. Pallier, *Recherches sur l'imprimerie à Paris pendant la Ligue*, pp. 556-57. Moreover, Nyvelle printed for the League (Pallier, p. 557) and Chesneau, who had already published texts by Benoist at this point, continued to publish many of the theologian's works after 1566.

¹⁸⁸ In addition to this, he established a branch of his publishing house in Geneva and 'est reçu bourgeois de Genève le 18 février 1572'. Bogaert, p. 80.

¹⁸⁹ Benoist's dedication is dated 20 September 1566 and furthermore, the 'Description des années depuis la création du monde' is dated 1566 in the Benoist Bible, but 1565 in the Honorat Bible; as Chambers indicates, C366, B1566hon is in fact a re-issue of C351, B1565hon. Printers would thus have had access to this Bible before printing Benoist's. In turn, B1565hon is based on C308, B1563per (Geneva, François Perrin) with some material from C335, B1564tou (Lyons, Jean de Tournes). The arrangement of the contents of the latter was influenced by B1563per. I have not been able to access copies of these versions, which, as earlier publications, possibly served as models.

¹⁹⁰ The question which remains to be answered is how Benoist's printers came to possess woodcuts identical to those of Honorat. The explanation lies beyond the scope of this study.

The manner in which Benoist's Bible was produced has clear implications when we consider Benoist's methods as a writer; it supports the idea that he was an enabler, assembling texts swiftly for the rapid dissemination of these works to the laity. The theologian's originality lies in the fact that he was a **Catholic** theologian producing this kind of text. The break with the *status quo* shows either courage or naivety, but if we consider Benoist's shrewd manoeuvrings during and after the Bible controversy, it seems unlikely that he was naïve. Before we leave peritextual concerns, let us conclude with one further point that involves peritextual elements: Benoist included his name in his Bible's title. This unusual move confirmed to the Catholic readership that it was an 'approved' version; it also suggests that the Bible project was important to Benoist, that he wanted his name associated with it, and is another indication of his commitment to the venture.

3

Epitext

An examination of the peritextual additions to Benoist's Scriptural translations has indicated some of the possible influences on the theologian. However, the style and content of the texts we have been examining were obviously affected by the fact that they were designed to accompany vernacular translations of the Bible. In addition to this, the majority of the material was limited in the period it spanned: 1566-68. The peritextual additions to Benoist's French version of Tobit extended the time period covered and also showed a change in the content and style of Benoist's argumentation, perhaps because they were written at a time after papal condemnation (thus resulting in a chastened Benoist) or because the work appeared after Plantin's 1578 French Bible, when the publication of a small portion of the Bible in translation was not, in comparison, a controversial exercise and Benoist had emerged successful in his venture. Let us now further broaden our understanding of the theologian's attitude to the dissemination of God's word

by analysing material found in a range of publications covering a significantly longer time period, that is from Benoist's early work in the 1560s to his last publications in 1608.

In this section, we consider what, for Benoist, constitutes God's word, who should interpret it, and, finally, who should have access to it in the form of the Bible; when Benoist considers the latter point with regard to the laity, as we shall see, the attitude he adopts in later publications shows an ambiguous but undoubtedly less controversial stance than that taken at the time of the Bible affair. However, his arguments continue to carry the mark of someone influenced by pre-Reformation trends, whilst increasingly using the Council of Trent's rulings as a shield. Because Benoist had achieved his goal through Plantin's Bible in 1578, from that point there was no requirement for Benoist to take a confrontational stance; instead, he grew more defensive and distanced himself from anything which could be construed as a Reformist view.

a) How did Benoist interpret 'God's word'?

Let us commence by examining Benoist's general views of God's word. Although in the numerous works that I have consulted the theologian does not often return to the subject of vernacular Bibles, he constantly asserts the importance of God's word, the foundation of the Christian Faith,¹⁹¹ and subscribes to the traditional view that 'la parole de Dieu n'est pas la seule escripture sainte, mais tout ce que Dieu revele en son Eglise'.¹⁹² By explaining

¹⁹¹ 'Cela estant tout certain que la pierre ferme, sur laquelle il nous faut estre fondez en la Chrestienté, est la parole de Dieu, sans laquelle il n'y a rien de certain et constant.' René Benoist, *Premier tome des refutations des impietez et apertes ignorances proposees contre la religion chrestienne, par Jean de L'Espine, soy disant ministre de la parole de Dieu: contenant la response aux blasphemes et cavillations qu'impudemment il a escrit contre le saint et divin sacrifice de la Messe* (Paris: Chaudière, 1568), pp. 8-9.

¹⁹² René Benoist, *Brieve response a quelque remonstrance faite a la roine mere du Roy, par ceux qui se disent persecutez pour la parole de Dieu. 1561. [...] A Messieurs les reverendissimes*

that God's word is not merely Scripture, that there is an unwritten element¹⁹³ and thus defending Catholic ceremonies and traditions,¹⁹⁴ Benoist conforms to the rulings of the Council of Trent, which decreed:

Our lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, first proclaimed with his own lips this gospel, which had in the past been promised by the prophets in the sacred scriptures; then he bade it be preached to every creature through his apostles as the source of the whole truth of salvation and rule of conduct. The council clearly perceives that this truth and rule are contained in written books and in unwritten traditions which were received by the apostles from the mouth of Christ himself, or else have come down to us, handed on as it were from the apostles themselves at the inspiration of the holy Spirit. Following the example of the orthodox fathers, the council accepts and venerates [...] traditions concerning both faith and conduct, as either directly spoken by Christ or dictated by the holy Spirit, which have been preserved in unbroken sequence in the catholic church.¹⁹⁵

This formulation defending the 'unwritten traditions' was, of course, rejected by the Protestant Church, and represented one of the fundamental differences between the Churches.

When dealing with the interpretation of the written portion of God's word, Benoist continues to show an orthodox line, rejecting the humanist philological approach and 'modern' theologians who use such scholarship:

Que si aucuns Theologiens de ce temps (qui ne s'amusent que par trop en la Grammaire, et en l'escorce de la lettre) presumptueux et arrogans, pour estre quelque peu versez aux langues, entendoient sainement ces matieres, et exactement les consideroient, ils ne seroient tant prompts, ny tant effrontez, que de rejeter ignoramment, et blasmer les anciens expositeurs de la sainte Bible, qui sont tres-approuvez, et personnages, j'ose dire, trop plus excellens en toute sorte d'erudition, que ne sont ceux-cy: ains au contraire ils sousmettroient leur orgueilleuse cognoissance tant de la propriete de grammaire, que des langues, à l'interpretation Catholique et spirituelle: chose qui leur tourneroit a profit et a salut.¹⁹⁶

prelatz de France, assemblez à Poëssy pour la religion (Paris: Guillard et Warencore, 1561), fol. 12^r.

¹⁹³ 'Les fideles doivent recognoistre en l'Eglise de nostre Seigneur la parole de Dieu escrite, et non escrite.' Benoist, *Exposition*, 'Passages de Saint Marc', fol. 9^v.

¹⁹⁴ 'Il ne s'ensuit pas: Nostre Seigneur a recommandé la recherche des escritures: *Ergo* il a rejeté les traditions, lesquelles l'écriture ailleurs souvent recommande, et commande aux Chrestiens de les observer, ores qu'elles ne soient point escrites.' Benoist, *Exposition*, 'Passages de saint Jean', fol. 11^v.

¹⁹⁵ Session four, first decree on the acceptance of sacred books and apostolic traditions (8 April 1546). Tanner, II, 663.

¹⁹⁶ Benoist, *Exposition*, 'Passages du Deuteronomie', fol. 2^v.

In this respect, Benoist distances himself from Reformed theologians such as Jean Calvin and Théodore de Bèze whose exegetical methods owed much to philology, not to mention the original work and advances of Erasmus and Lefèvre.¹⁹⁷

b) Who should have access to God's word and in what form?

Let us now turn to the less straightforward question of who should have access to God's word and the form this should take. We begin by concentrating on members of the clergy and those in religious orders – although this in some cases has repercussions on the masses – before passing to the laity.

i) Pastors, monks and nuns

Benoist, as has been indicated in Chapter 2, perceives the preaching of God's word to the laity as essential. He emphasises this point on many occasions, linking it to a criticism of the clergy; he repeatedly accuses pastors of not carrying out their duties properly. In one instance, he argues that this causes the masses to turn away from the Catholic Church:

[...] à present plusieurs veulent quicter [la profession de la religion chrestienne] par ce qu'ilz n'entendent la raison de telles choses, par ce que les pasteurs ne prechent la parole de Dieu, et n'enseignent la religion Chrestienne.¹⁹⁸

Throughout his texts, Benoist affirms that God's word should be given to the people by Church pastors, but that they fail in this task. As we have found previously, Benoist continually builds on the link between the neglect of God's

¹⁹⁷ See Irena Backus' 'Biblical Hermeneutics and Exegesis', in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, I, 152-58.

¹⁹⁸ René Benoist, *Brieve et facile response aux objections d'une damoysele, par lesquelles elle rejette la Sainte Messe, et ne la veult ouyr; ou il est monstré qu'elle doit estre dicte et celebrée*

word and existing clerical abuses, to reach the conclusion that renewal is needed at all levels of the Church.

The theologian never questions that clergy or members of religious orders should have direct access to God's word. Indeed, as shown previously, he complains that it is underused in sermons to the faithful. Moreover, he argues that those in religious orders should refer to it more often for their personal edification and salvation. This neglect, he claims, extends to nuns who read Rabelais rather than the Bible:

Je ne sçay si j'oseray dire que quelques unes lisent plus souvent et plus volontiers les livres d'un atheiste Rabelais, d'un dissolu Marot, ou de quelque autre folastre et impudique poetastre, ou autre depravé et dissolu escrivant, que la Bible, et mesmes leur breviere. Est-ce là le moyen de garder chasteté? Est-ce là le moyen de ne sentir la rebellion de la chair? Est-ce le moyen de se garder sans souilleure et coïnquination du monde puant et corrompu? C'est certes tout le contraire.¹⁹⁹

He continues by exhorting those in orders to read the Bible. Following Jerome and other Church Fathers, Benoist suggests that Scripture should be readily available for those in monasteries and nunneries, although he underlines that the Church's interpretation should be followed:

Je fay juge saint Hierosme, et autres doctes et saints peres de la primitive Eglise, lesquels ont voulu les escritures saintes estre ordinairement és mains des Religieux et Religieuses, leur enseignant qu'aymant et frequentant la leçon des escritures saintes, ils n'aymeroyent et ne poursuyvroyent les vices de la chair. [...] lire les Escritures saintes, et les entendre, et prendre au sens de l'Eglise Catholique, qui est le moyen de n'y estre jamais trompé, et cognoistre l'abuz des uns, et l'erreur des autres.²⁰⁰

en latin. Il a esté adjousté un brief traicté, contenant certaines raisons pour fortifier une autre damoyselle, assaillie et oppugnée en la foy par les heretiques (Paris: Chaudière, 1565), fol. 10^r.

¹⁹⁹ René Benoist, *Remonstrance aux prestres, religieuses et moynes, qui sous le pretexte d'un licite mariage, ont commis abhominable inceste et sacrilege. En laquelle est monstré evidemment que (moyennant la grace de Dieu) il n'est impossible, soit aux hommes ou aux femmes, de vivre en perpetuelle continence* (Paris: Chesneau, 1567), fol. 15^r. I shall return to Benoist's treatment of Rabelais, Marot and 'impudiques poetastres' in Chapter 4.

²⁰⁰ Benoist, *Remonstrance aux prestres*, fols 18^{r-v}. The marginal notes guide us to Benoist's arguments ('L'excellence des vrayz religieux et religieuses leur baille le privilege de lire ordinairement les Escritures saintes'; 'L'escriture sainte bien entendue chasse les erreurs et les abus'), whilst indicating that this group's 'privilege' to read Scripture is an exception rather than rule.

The question of the language of the Bible is passed over, although it seems unlikely that all nuns would have been able to understand Latin Bibles. Benoist thus attacks abuses within his own Church once again – this time reminiscent of Rabelais and his comments about monks and nuns (although this is an author whom Benoist clearly disdains) – whilst arguing for vernacular translations of Scripture, albeit within restricted circles.

As a contrast to the neglect of God's word by pastors, monks and nuns, if we look at Benoist's use of Scripture as a preacher and writer, he appears to lead by example. We have already observed in Chapter 2 that his work can form a patchwork of biblical references and quotations. As a theologian and preacher he was unequivocal that he should use Scripture extensively, as should others. More controversial for the period in which he operated were his suggestions that he could make new interpretations of Scripture and that using the Church Fathers was superfluous or inappropriate in many cases.

Before we move to more contentious issues, let us conclude our findings to this point briefly: Benoist does not stray from the orthodox in his definition of God's word or, on a basic level, in the area of Scriptural interpretation. However, the theologian's repeated criticism of his own Church seems extraordinary: all levels of those within the Catholic Church are attacked for their abuses; nuns are accused of abandoning Scripture for entirely inappropriate texts. Of course, although his colleagues may have been disturbed by these sentiments, Benoist is merely repeating traditional Gallican complaints. Finally, if we return to the findings of Chapter 2, the autonomy Benoist suggests he should have in preaching God's word is most striking.

ii) The laity

On the subject of vernacular Bibles and the laity, a consistent line of argumentation can be perceived over several texts. However, it is important to note that in general Benoist remains remarkably restrained on the subject for one who wrote prolifically about the disputed issues of the day; he seems to avoid dealing with the question if possible. It should also be noted that the comments which follow mostly derive from texts which postdate the papal condemnation of 1575.²⁰¹

In the post-1575 material, Benoist insists that Scripture is a difficult text which needs interpretation by the appropriate people; because of its difficulty, Scripture should be forbidden to those not able to follow the Catholic interpretation as delivered by pastors and theologians:

Ainsi l'Ecriture sainte est une escriture fort difficile, estant un livre escrit dehors et dedans, et fermé de 7. seaux: ayant et donnant autre chose en la lettre, et autre en l'esprit, ne pouvant estre entendu sans l'ouye de l'exposition de ceux qui ont le mesme esprit, qui est autheur d'icelle sainte Escriture, qui sont les pasteurs hierarchiques. C'est pourquoy la sainte Bible justement doit estre defendue en quelconque langue qu'elle soit escrite, à toute personne qui n'en prend l'exposition et l'intelligence par l'ouye des pasteurs et docteurs saints, sinceres et Catholiques.²⁰²

²⁰¹ I do not include in this section comments made by Benoist relating to Bibles that will be discussed in Chapter 4; these outline a plan to supply the masses with texts – including Scripture – popular in the pre-Reformation period (for example, saints' lives and the *Vita Christi*). These comments are found in a 1573 publication (*Catéchèses ou instructions touchant les poincts à présent controversés en la religion, accomodées aux evangiles d'un chacun jour de Caresme: proposées en sermons en l'église de S. Eustache à Paris l'an 1573 [...]* (PQ43)) and in peritextual material to the hagiographical work in which Benoist was involved from the late 1570s (PQ53-55; see following note). As we shall see in Chapter 4, in the latter material, the theologian writes of the excellence of Scripture, with hagiographical material clearly shown to be inferior. It should be noted that at the same time as giving his plan to provide the laity with Bibles, hagiographical material and other religious texts, in the peritextual additions to the saints' lives, he adopts the cautious positioning that will be described in this section. However, with the exception of the texts which are cited and those discussed in Chapter 4, as yet, I have found little other material in Benoist's publications relating to vernacular Bibles and the laity and even less in texts published before 1566.

²⁰² René Benoist, *Notables resolutions des presens differens de la religion: prononcees par diverses predications, en plus de cinquante caresmes, preschez tant en ce royaume, que hors iceluy. Le tout dressé sur chacun jour de caresme*, 2 vols (Paris: Chevallier, 1608), I, 'Avant-propos', fol. ã4^r. For similar statements, see *Histoire de la vie, mort, passion et miracles des saints* [...] (Paris: Macé, 1602), 'Opuscul des histoires chrestiennes, vies, et legendes des saints, comme aussi du moyen qu'il faut tenir pour les divulguer, et pour y profiter en les lisant,

Of course, the last sentence contains a neat argument for someone who does approve of translations. According to Benoist's line of reasoning (which echoes the one seen in the peritext to Benoist's translation of Tobit), when he provided versions of Scripture in Latin 'ou autrement' (French, presumably), they were not for all to read indiscriminately and he always remained within the Council of Trent's decrees:

Car Dieu eternal a tousjours voulu, l'Ecriture enseigné, et l'Eglise commandé, que tous, de quelque qualité et condition qu'ils soient, viennent par obeissance, humilité et devotion recevoir, prendre et entendre les choses qui appartiennent à leur salut, de la chaise où sont assis leurs prelates et pasteurs hierarchiques, ordinairement, ou autres extraordinairement, approuvez toutefois et mis par iceux ordinaires. Ce qu'a tousjours esté mon advis, n'ayant jamais eu en intention, la proposant, soit en Latin ou autrement, qu'elle fust indifferemment eue et leuë de tous; ains que la communication en fust faicte conformément à la determination du saint et oecumenique Concile de Trente.²⁰³

In a much earlier text written in the 1560s, Benoist argues that allowing everyone access to the Bible in the vernacular would be useless and damaging:

Au chap. 16. il est dit: *Preschez l'Evangile à toute creature*. Aucuns par ce texte veulent inferer, qu'il faut proposer à un chacun les escritures saintes en langage vulgaire. Mais ilz s'abusent, par ce que c'est autre chose d'enseigner le peuple les poincts qui sont à tous nécessaires à salut: et autre chose est de divulguer au peuple les mysteres de la sacree

selon la foy, tradition et moeurs de l'Eglise catholique, apostolique et romaine, prins du livre ou tome des opuscles de N. M. René Benoist [...]', Chapter III, fol. ã5^r. Benoist oversaw the assembly of this publication and provided peritextual material for it. His first publication of an edition of the saints' lives came in 1577; if this pamphlet was included, the date for these comments can be pushed back to that year. However, Benoist changed and revised the material to this major work several times; because I have not been able to consult the 1577 edition, nor several subsequent editions, I cannot confirm the year in which these comments first appeared with the hagiographical material. On a final note, see also *Histoire de la vie, mort, passion et miracles des saints* (Paris: Bonfons, 1607), 'Epistre au Roy', fol. ¶2^r, for argumentation concerning Bibles relying on the same biblical reference to Revelation 5; as this was presumably addressed to King Henri IV, the comments date from the mid-1590s at the earliest.

²⁰³ Benoist, *Notables resolutions*, 'Avant-propos', I, fols ã4^{r-v}. In an earlier text, Benoist insists that although there are difficulties within the Bible, 'il y a en icelle des choses fort aisées, bien populaires et historiques'; he asserts that access should not be prevented to the Bible in its entirety, but neither should it be given indiscriminately (*Histoire de la vie, mort, passion et miracles des saints* (1602), 'Opuscul des histoires chrestiennes', Chapter X, fol. ë2^v). Moreover, in peritext to a 1577 edition of the saints' lives (*Histoire de la vie, mort, passion et miracles des saints*, 3 vols ([n.p.]: Chesneau and Poupy, 1577), (PQ54), III, 'Plusieurs advertissements notables touchant les légendes des saints, le grand vita Christi et les Bibles vulgaires'), Benoist insists that Bibles are useful and even necessary, but should not be permitted indiscriminately (cited in Pasquier, pp. 106-07, 168-69).

écriture. Car le premier est à tous nécessaire: mais l'autre seroit non seulement inutile, ains aussi dommageable à plusieurs.²⁰⁴

Benoist does not then advocate free and unguided access for all. Ironically, this passage comes from a text by Benoist included at the back of some copies of his 1566 French Bible, for which it appears to have been translated. Either this remains out of error or Benoist felt that by providing marginal notes and other reader aids, the situation had been rectified.²⁰⁵

Benoist's point of view seems unclear, perhaps intentionally so. Let us consider the new reasoning which has emerged, firstly within the context of the French Catholic Church. Benoist's position – even with the qualifications above – challenges the stance of his colleagues at the Faculty of Theology, who had banned all vernacular translations from the 1520s. If we examine the statements of François Le Picart, a Catholic theologian from the generation preceding Benoist's, there is an obvious disagreement. Le Picart, 'the most famous Catholic preacher in Paris from the 1530s until his death in 1556',²⁰⁶ found vernacular translations problematic, as Larissa Taylor notes:

Even when the translations are acceptable,²⁰⁷ putting them in the hands of simple folk is dangerous, for 'there are a number of passages in scripture that when translated into the vulgar tongue give more occasion for error than for good because of the simplicity and weakness of people'.²⁰⁸

Thus Le Picart was very restrictive about vernacular Bibles even though in other ways, as Taylor comments, he was more favourable to humanist ideas than many of the older members of the Faculty of Theology:

²⁰⁴ Benoist, *Exposition*, 'Passages de Saint Marc', fol. 10^r.

²⁰⁵ The *Exposition's* passage cited above does not appear to be in the original Latin text which accompanied the Latin Bible (Jean Benoist's) edited by Benoist and published c.1564 (see PQ156 and PQ19). It could, however, have appeared in a subsequent Latin edition of the text (it was printed in various formats (see note 242 below)) which appeared before the 1566 French Bible. I have been unable to consult the relevant editions and so cannot confirm when the passage first appeared.

²⁰⁶ Taylor, *Heresy and Orthodoxy*, p. x.

²⁰⁷ Taylor has outlined some of the aspects of what Le Picart perceived as 'unacceptable' translations, including 'incorrect renderings of words and meaning'. Taylor, *Heresy and Orthodoxy*, p. 95.

Unlike older colleagues in the Faculty of Theology [...] Le Picart was not an intransigent man. Although his passion for Catholicism was acknowledged by all and his orthodoxy was never questioned, he was far from immune to new ideas. His ambivalence about the study of philology, classics and ancient languages all demonstrate the influence humanistic ideals held over him.²⁰⁹

If we move forwards in time to consider Benoist's position against those at the end of the sixteenth century, the historian Jacques Pannier judges Benoist exceptional.²¹⁰ Strong reservations over French Bibles remained within the Catholic Church towards the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth century. Citing Montaigne ('encore un homme du XVI^e siècle') and François de Sales ('qui inaugure le XVII^e'), Bogaert comments that 'favorisée par les protestants, la lecture de la Bible en langue française n'a été que tolérée juridiquement chez les catholiques. Dans la vie courante, elle apparaît à ceux-ci comme nuisible ou défendue'.²¹¹ From the 1520s to the beginning of the seventeenth century, the main thrust of Benoist's statements, however qualified, finds little support.

However, it is more appropriate for us to turn once again to the late medieval and pre-Reform periods, when an entirely different approach was taken in the area of Scriptural translation in France. As Bogaert demonstrates, before the sixteenth century, few judgements were made by ecclesiastical authorities; if they were,

²⁰⁸ Taylor, *Heresy and Orthodoxy*, pp. 95-96.

²⁰⁹ Taylor, *Heresy and Orthodoxy*, p. xiv. See also Bedouelle and Roussel (pp. 471-73) for arguments against vernacular Bibles. They reproduce the words of Esprit Rotier, Pierre Lizet and Ambroise Catharin from texts published in the middle of the sixteenth century. At the conclusion, however, Catharin reluctantly qualifies his position, allows that a translation might be reprinted (and even a new version drawn up), but with conditions attached. Benoist's Bible fulfils most of the conditions, for instance, the inclusion of the author's name, an approval, and annotations giving the Catholic interpretation of passages contested by heretics (p. 473).

²¹⁰ Jacques Pannier studied the period towards the end of Benoist's career and drew attention to Benoist's outpourings over Scripture in the 1601 *Briefve proposition [...] à [...] Madame la duchesse de Bar* (PQ124): Benoist labels Scripture 'règle de salut' and writes of 'vénérables et adorables et vivifiantes Escritures saintes'; Benoist also invites his reader to 'une fichée et arrestée admiration très douce et très agréable' of divine works. On the Catholic side, Pannier observes, 'cette sorte d'apothéose, sans réserves [...] est une exception'. Pannier, *L'Église Réformée de Paris sous Henri IV*, p. 252. Pannier sees this as confirmation that there was 'un rapprochement des esprits, une recherche d'un terrain d'entente entre les deux Eglises'. I think this unlikely in the case of Benoist; he does not show signs of this in the texts I have consulted.

²¹¹ Bogaert, pp. 108-09 (p. 108). See also Chédozeau's findings in Bogaert, pp. 134-35.

they were mostly ‘locales’ and ‘un aspect de la lutte contre telle ou telle hérésie et ne doivent pas faire croire à une méfiance généralisée ou endémique’.²¹² In general, the moral and historical aspects were thought suitable for the laity, a position to which Gerson conforms in *Contra curiositatem studentium* (1402), where he suggests that it is permissible to allow historical and wisdom books in translation, although no others.²¹³ Indeed, as has been pointed out, this roughly corresponds to what was available in the *Bible historiale*, which circulated in various forms in manuscript before the arrival of the printing press.²¹⁴ It was only in the context of heterodox thought and movements (the legacy of Wycliffe, the Lollard Bible, and the activities of Huss) that Gerson later pronounced against vernacular Bibles.²¹⁵ Against this backdrop, Benoist’s views do not seem so out of step.

Finally, looking beyond the French authorities, if we re-examine the Roman legislation in this area, there were gaps which could be exploited. As noted above, the Council of Trent left the matter unresolved;²¹⁶ even after the more restrictive material relating to vernacular Bibles (Rule IV of the 1564 Index issued by Pope Pius IV, Pope Clement VIII’s 1596 ‘Observation’ on Rule IV), nothing in principle forbade reading the Bible.²¹⁷ Indeed, the Bible could be read in the form of the Vulgate or in the original languages, although, admittedly, the masses would not have been capable of reading the Bible in this form. In theory, vernacular Bibles were not forbidden, although the 1564 and 1596 rulings meant that various formalities had to be observed and permissions had to be gained.²¹⁸

²¹² Bogaert, p. 41.

²¹³ *Contra curiositatem studentium*, in Jean Gerson, *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. by P. Glorieux, 10 vols (Paris: Desclée, 1960-74), III (1962), 249. See Jennifer Britnell, *Jean Bouchet* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1986), p. 191; Bogaert, p. 42.

²¹⁴ Bogaert, p. 42.

²¹⁵ For example, see the *Tractatus contra haeresim de communione laicorum sub utraque specie* of 1417, found in Jean Gerson, *Opera*, 4 vols (Paris: [n.pub.], 1606), I, col. 523F. See Bogaert, p. 42.

²¹⁶ The second decree of session four (8 April 1546) required books on sacred subjects to have certain approvals and assessments; Benoist could argue that he had fulfilled the criteria. Tanner, II, 664-65.

²¹⁷ On this, see Bedouelle and Roussel, pp. 468-69.

²¹⁸ For the permissions needed, see Bedouelle and Roussel, p. 469.

When Benoist continues to claim that he has not done anything against the rulings of the Council of Trent, there were no doubt enough gaps in the decrees for this to be true, and, if we examine the proceedings, it is evident that amongst some of the participants at Trent, the theologian would have found support, particularly with his qualifications taken into account. Benoist could argue that his Bibles were only to be consulted by those who had the relevant permissions.

c) What can we tell from Benoist's Scriptural translations after 1568?

In the light of the above, let us turn to two later works which contain extended passages of the Bible in French; the first confirms Benoist's interest in the Tridentine proceedings, whilst the second reinforces Benoist's more cautious position. We briefly reconsider Benoist's comments in his translation of Tobit, before turning to one of his last publications, which contains material used by the theologian from the pulpit.²¹⁹ This long work of over 1000 pages contains many passages from the Old and New Testaments in French. Both publications carry a vast quantity of annotations; although these are different from those in Benoist's Bible, he appears to have used the 1566 translation as the source for the passages taken from Scripture.²²⁰ This tends to indicate that he stood by his version even after he had rejected it in 1598.

²¹⁹ Benoist, *Notables resolutions* (1608).

²²⁰ I detected few differences in the passages I sampled, although verse numbers have been removed on both occasions. Differences in Tobit (1579): new 'arguments' added and slight revisions (for example, spelling; God addressed as 'vous' instead of 'tu'); in the *Notables resolutions* (1608) (passages sampled from Joel, Isaiah, Matthew and Luke): light punctuation and spelling revisions. In a 1589 treatise, Benoist provides the translation of the punishment texts Leviticus 26 and Isaiah 1 and 3. (René Benoist, *Advertissement et conseil notable a la France, touchant ses presentes extremes miseres et calamitez, et la crainte de plus grandes, si elle ne fait penitence, retournant à son Dieu tout bon et misericordieux: où elle est advertie de sa maladie, de la cause, et du remede d'icelle* (Paris: Hury, 1589), 'Advertissement touchant les propres textes de l'Ecriture sainte icy adjoustez: scavoir est, Levit. 26. Esaie 1. et 3. ch. lesquels tous sincerés chrestiens et bons catholiques devroient tousjours avoir és mains, et en leur memoire. Car en iceux nous avons comme une prognostication et prediction de tout bien ou mal, qui adviendra à tous royaumes, à toutes villes, et à toutes personnes', pp. 23-32.) Comparison with the 1566 Bible

As discussed previously, Benoist's peritextual additions to the 1579 Tobit exhibit a change from the argumentation employed in his 1566 and 1568 Bible prefaces. In fact, the reasoning is repeated in Benoist's career, predominantly at a later date, as indicated above. As a historical book, the common view of the late medieval period would be that Tobit was permitted in translation; Benoist may have been influenced by late medieval trends in this area. We can say with more certainty that Benoist follows the dealings at Trent scrupulously when it comes to the second, separate issue of canonicity: he labels the book 'saint et canonique'.²²¹ In the relevant Tridentine decree, Tobit is indeed listed with books such as Matthew and Mark as 'sacred and canonical'.²²² This, however, does not tell the whole story. Absent from the Jewish canon, Jerome designated Tobit, along with books such as Judith and Wisdom, as Apocryphal, suitable for the purposes of edification alone.²²³ Erasmus and Luther agreed with this, as did Cardinal Cajetan. At Trent, pursuing this line, the Augustinian Girolamo Seripando, with the Bishop of Fano, Pietro Bertano, wished to distinguish between books which were 'canonical and authentic' on which Faith depended (*canon fidei*) and those which were 'canonical and ecclesiastical', for instruction and edification (*canon morum*).²²⁴ Some at Trent were unsure whether one could draw dogma from Apocryphal books,²²⁵ but, in the end, no distinction was established, on the grounds that it would introduce doubt where they sought to bring certainty.²²⁶ Benoist follows the Council by calling Tobit 'saint et canonique', but when at the same time he stresses the moral and historical

suggests that Benoist used his Bible again. He also refers the reader to Joel 1 (drunkards) and Micah 3 (princes) (p. 26). The spirit in which he presents these sobering texts is one of universal reform ('Reformons noz moeurs, mais retenons la foy et religion ancienne et profession d'icelle en l'union de la hierarchie ecclesiastique siege du saint Esprit', p. 26). The year of publication no doubt restricted Benoist from making specific attacks.

²²¹ Benoist, *Traicté enseignant en bref les causes des malefices*, 'Argument sur le livre de Tobie', fol. Ee5^v (fol. 219^v).

²²² First decree, session four (8 April 1546). Tanner, II, 663-64.

²²³ Jedin, II, 56-57 (p. 56).

²²⁴ Jedin, II, 57; Bedouelle and Roussel, pp. 332-42 (p. 334).

²²⁵ Jedin, II, 74.

²²⁶ Bedouelle and Roussel, pp. 337-38.

level,²²⁷ he reveals the influence of Jerome and several of the Trent participants; this is not the influence of Protestantism on Benoist. Furthermore, Benoist writes again of Tobit's edifying element ('en ce saint et canonique Livre auquel sont enseignez et proposez **les bonnes meurs** aussi necessaires à salut comme est la foy [...]),²²⁸ clearly echoing the vocabulary of the proposed *canon morum*. Finally, by referring to the 'sens allegoric' of Tobit,²²⁹ Benoist distances himself from Calvin, who rejected allegory as speculation.²³⁰

Let us now turn to Benoist's *Notables resolutions* of 1608. Published at the end of the theologian's life, his peritext to this work has already shown us a preference for quoting Scripture over the Church Fathers; it also revealed a desire for autonomy in the area of Scriptural interpretation (see Chapter 2). Does Benoist extend these bold statements by advocating the laity's access to Scripture in translation? At first glance it might seem this way, as Benoist states:

[...] il est fort utile à l'auditeur de sçavoir le texte, lequel est exposé au sermon [which must have as its foundation the Epistles or Gospels]. Car il y profitera ainsi d'avantage: comme l'escolier qui a un livre, et prevoit ce que son regent expose, profite davantage à la leçon. Or le present livre vous baille ceste commodité là, et plusieurs autres, tant devant que apres le sermon.²³¹

However, as Benoist, reinforced by biblical quotations, explains, Scripture is not appropriate for 'le simple et idiot peuple', but it is for the 'plus avancez en la religion chrestienne'.

²²⁷ Benoist, *Traicté enseignant en bref les causes des malefices*, 'Argument sur le livre de Tobie', fol. Ee5^v (fol. 219^v).

²²⁸ Benoist, *Traicté enseignant en bref les causes des malefices*, 'Argument sur le livre de Tobie', fol. Ee5^v (fol. 219^v). My highlighting.

²²⁹ Benoist, *Traicté enseignant en bref les causes des malefices*, Chapter 4 of the *Traicté* signalled in the title, fol. Ee5^r (fol. 219^r).

²³⁰ See *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, I, 155.

²³¹ Benoist, *Notables resolutions*, I, 'Troisiesme advisement touchant l'usage et l'utilité du present livre', fol. ã6^r. As noted above, this book contains substantial Scriptural excerpts (with annotations): the Latin is given and this is then followed by a French translation; Benoist also provides exegesis in the traditional and increasingly outdated four-fold manner of interpretation (*The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, I, 157) in the material for each day; on a final note, all Latin passages, not only Scriptural, are accompanied with French translations. The book thus aims to ensure vernacular religious instruction drawing from a combination of techniques in use before the Reformation.

Le pain bis, auquel est non seulement la fleur, ains aussi le son et autres choses grossieres, est pour le commun, et pour personnes de petites et basses qualitez: ainsi en matiere de doctrine et de religion il y a des choses grossieres, vulgaires et populaires, comme sont les exemples, les images, les similitudes, les paraboles, et choses semblables, fort utiles et propres au simple peuple, non capable de solide et plus haute et spirituelle doctrine. C'est ce que enseignoit nostre Seigneur, Redempteur et divin Docteur Jesus-Christ, quand il disoit ainsi à ses Apostres: Il vous est donné de cognoistre le Royaume de Dieu: mais je parle aux autres en paraboles. Ainsi aussi saint Paul a escrit, qu'il y en a qui ont besoin de laict, n'estans capables de solide doctrine, comme aussi qu'il y en a des charnels et des spirituels. **C'est pourquoy jaçoit que tous puissent profiter en ce livre, la leçon en sera toutesfois plus propre aux plus avancez en la religion chrestienne, lesquels se fondent principalement sur le texte de l'Ecriture sainte, vray et seur fondement de salut: ne prenant si grand goust és doctrines populaires: comme aussi le simple et idiot peuple n'est si capable de la sainte Bible. Il faut de l'herbe aux uns, et du grain aux autres, chacun suivant sa mesure et propre don de la foy.**²³²

Benoist talks with candour in other parts of this work; it is tempting to believe that this is his final, considered statement on vernacular Bibles. However, it retains ambiguities; Benoist does not clarify who he means by the 'plus avancez en la religion chrestienne'. If members of the laity reach this category, it is a restricted circle of the most educated and literate (perhaps the nobility?).²³³ When the theologian argued against indiscriminate dissemination of the Bible, this may have meant with relation to permissions; equally, it may have suggested a small elite group of people. Benoist perhaps has the idea of a restricted market throughout, distinguishing between the literate and illiterate laity here and in previous comments. Possibly the low literacy levels, even amongst the urban public,²³⁴ together with the cost of printed Bibles, persuaded the theologian that his Scriptural translations would not reach peasant-folk. It should be remembered, however, that his publishers printed four different editions of his New Testament in the mid to late 1560s in Paris that we know about;²³⁵ at least three out of four were small-format publications (16^o) and thus affordable to those with more modest purses, a fact which throws doubt over Benoist's sincerity in the comments we have examined above.

²³² Benoist, *Notables resolutions*, I, 'Sixiesme advertissement, donnant autres raisons de la methode du present livre', fol. ã8^r. My highlighting.

²³³ Or is Benoist harking back to those in orders?

²³⁴ See *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, I, 166.

²³⁵ C378-79; C405-06; C413-15; C416.

* * *

Conclusion

When in 1595 Benoist calls the Bible the book of the priest and righteous layman,²³⁶ we cannot be sure whether he is suggesting that the priest should read the book, whilst in most cases the Bible should be given to the laity by the priest through the preached word or else only selected parts published with appropriate guidance provided, or whether Benoist is in fact revealing a desire to see all righteous laymen with access to vernacular Bibles. We cannot form any judgements from Benoist's earliest writings; he remains silent on the issue. However, our conclusions from the 1566 and 1568 peritext must still stand; in these, he demonstrates less ambiguity than in later texts. The arguments are often repeated and reproduced elsewhere during the Bible affair, for example, in the handwritten, anonymous *Juste et nécessaire complainte* containing Benoist's arguments from the pulpit. Benoist's writing at this period exhibits a vitality absent from the later cautious comments on vernacular Bibles. But it is perhaps his many manoeuvrings attempting to counter the Faculty of Theology's rulings from 1566 to 1575 which speak louder than any words regarding his commitment to providing a Catholic French Bible.

Although Benoist never advocated free and unguided access to the Bible, a more conservative note is introduced in his later comments. We cannot know what he genuinely believed in the 1560s or forty years later as he approached the end of his life; we can say that his writings in this area became increasingly defensive and self-justificatory. Benoist's thinking may have evolved; on the other hand, he may have deliberately modified the tone and content of his argumentation so that it was less controversial. He had succeeded in his enterprise – Catholic Bibles

²³⁶ 'la Sainte Bible, [...] le livre des Prestres et des justes'. René Benoist, *Quadri-partit. Contenant quatre charitables et notables advertissemens, pour appaiser Dieu, et avoir une paix bonne et assurée. 1. Pour le peuple. 2. Pour les ecclesiastiques. 3. Pour la noblesse. 4. Pour les magistrats* (Troyes: Moreau, 1595), p. 29.

were being printed in Paris by the end of the sixteenth century, something to which he never objected or sought to halt as Dean of the Faculty of Theology – and he had other battles to fight. It is also possible that he adopted an argument that he thought would persuade his colleagues to leave their entrenched positions. On the other hand, Benoist was perhaps chastened by the papal condemnation or the events of the Wars of Religion; we have already established that he was in danger from the League at some points of his career (see Chapter 1). It is also quite possible that he wanted to protect his reputation by exclusively using Trent and a more traditional late medieval position as his shield; these disassociated him from Reform movements (including humanism and evangelicals);²³⁷ it should be remembered that he needed papal bulls to confirm his bishopric from the 1590s. There were evidently a number of sound reasons why it would have been prudent for Benoist to moderate his arguments. Furthermore, we must not forget that at the same time as taking a more conservative line, the theologian continued to outline plans to provide the laity with religious works which included the Bible, as we shall see in Chapter 4.

Whatever lies behind Benoist's writing of any period, he always shows a down-to-earth approach and the influence of pre-Reformation thought. His language on several occasions indicates that he followed the events at Trent closely and reacted to the conditions of the time.²³⁸ He recognised that he lived in exceptional circumstances: a heretical group had established itself and provided its followers with Bibles; in addition to this, his Church's own pastors were incapable.²³⁹ The logical answer seemed to be to provide the faithful with Bibles:

²³⁷ Despite this, Benoist nevertheless shows signs of appreciating the work of humanists and evangelicals (see Chapter 4). With regard to their enthusiasm for free access to Scripture, it seems likely that he took note of their views in several areas, but also the resulting consequences; in essence, his actions regarding Bibles make their ideas workable within the Catholic Church.

²³⁸ For example, Benoist to the Faculty in 1572: 'suivant le Concile, j'ai attenté mettre lesdites Bibles en notre Langue François, m'y comportant selon l'exigence de notre tems.' Duplessis d'Argentré, II, 410-11 (p. 411).

²³⁹ When under pressure, Benoist sometimes switches the blame for the world's woes to the masses for their godless behaviour. For instance, see René Benoist, *Advertissement exhortatoire à ceux de la parroisse de S. Eustache à Paris, lesquels ayans esté seduicts et trompez sous couleur et pretexte d'une Eglise reformee et plus pure religion, se sont retranchez de la profession de la*

Il n'appartient à tous de porter les armes, aussi n'appartient-il à tous d'avoir la Bible, ains aux nobles et princes de la chrétienté qui sont les pasteurs hiérarchiques ayant puissance des armes spirituelles (II Cor, X.); quand la noblesse se plaisait de porter les armes il n'était besoin alors d'armer la populace; mais quand il a été besoin de défendre le prince et même la noblesse, il a été nécessaire d'armer le peuple; ainsi quand les pasteurs étaient si suffisants et vertueux qu'ils défendaient leurs sujets contre les diables par leurs prières, contre le monde par leur exemple de sainte vie, et contre les hérétiques par le glaive de l'esprit qui est la parole de Dieu, il n'était mention de mettre tant de livres saints et armes spirituelles ès mains du peuple; mais quand ils sont devenus tels que l'on sait, le peuple n'étant défendu par eux, sera-t-il trouvé étrange que, les ennemis du peuple catholique étant armés de livres de méchante doctrine, l'on veut aussi armer les catholiques ... il est meilleur d'étayer la maison que de la laisser tomber par le défaut des piliers. Ce n'est pas prudence et zèle discret de tenir mordicus en tout temps ce qu'ont dit les Pères anciens ..., je me demande si même bientôt plusieurs feront encore cas des Bibles quand nous voudrons les leur bailler.²⁴⁰

This was published in a work following Benoist's papal condemnation and takes us back to the arguments of the 1566 Bible dedication in style and content; significantly, it was printed in 1577, one year before Plantin's Bible, and thus before success had been assured. It is also important to note that when Benoist rejected his work in 1598, he certainly did not condemn all vernacular Bibles and that in the posthumous *Declaration* he even suggested that he had considered returning to the work to correct it after 1598.²⁴¹

In later years, Benoist's writings claimed that he was not content to let Bibles circulate indiscriminately; any Bibles that did circulate had to be guided by the Church, although he had never suggested anything other than this. The theologian makes it explicit that if the clergy had performed its duties correctly, instructing and defending the faithful with God's word, his course of action would have been

foy et religion chrestienne, proposee en l'Eglise catholique, hors laquelle il n'y a point de salut (Paris: Chesneau, 1569); see in particular fols 2^v-3^r and 7^v onwards. In 1569, Benoist was in the thick of the Bible controversy.

²⁴⁰ Benoist, *Histoire de la vie, mort, passion et miracles des saints* (1577), III, 'Plusieurs advertissements notables touchant les légendes des saints, le grand vita Christi et les Bibles vulgaires', 'Second avertissement', cited in Pasquier, pp. 107-08.

²⁴¹ 'Des lors que je suis rentré par mon antiquité en seance, suffrage, et Doyenné je me suis bien proposé d'achever le reste de la correction de l'oeuvre, auquel je peux dire ce que disoit Simonide, qui avoit a répondre de la nature de Dieu, que plus on y pense, moins on y entend: le nombre des corrections en surpasse une capacité plus que la mienne. Il y faut venir non par le menu, ains en tache et en bloc, je m'en remetz au Cahier qu'en firent lors les deputés de la faculté, qu'il faut extrayre des registres d'icelle. [...] Aussi ay-je esté a vray dire, trop long a ceste

superfluous. However, this was not the case and heretics had provided ‘poisonous’ versions and interpretations of Scripture. Benoist was above all a practical man, who worked close to his parishioners. As the conclusion to the final text bound in the 1566 Bible shows, his work filled a void:

Je te prie affectueusement, Lecteur Chrestien, que si outre ces passages cottés par nous, lesquels (Dieu aidant) et plusieurs autres nous remarquerons en nos Bibles tant Latines que vulgaires, et rendrons plus clairs, s’en trouvent quelques autres en tout ce tresample volume de la Sainte Bible (comment il y en peult avoir beaucoup) qui pour avoir esté corrompus, obscurcis et destorts par les heretiques, qui depravent toutes choses saintes, et les blasphement, t’esmouvent aucun scruple, ou qui te faschent, je te prie (di-je) m’en advertir. Car nous avons proposé et entrepris de defendre, et par la grace de Dieu monstrier clerement a tout chacun, que la sainte escriture ne contrarie en aucune chose a l’ancienne et Catholique profession de la religion Chrestienne, comme aussi elle ne favorize ne consent a la nouvelle impieté: proposans faire le mesme es decretz des Conciles, et escrits des anciens docteurs, s’il plait à Dieu tout puissant permettre que nous puissions par temps a ce suffisant durer en ce monde: afin que ces Sectaires n’ayent rien de quoy ils puissent courir leurs bourdes et s’en orgueillir, estans abuseurs ignorans et obstinés. Car quant aux abus qui sont en l’Eglise, nous ne les entreprenons point à defendre, mais desirons plustost qu’ils soient corrigés par tout moyen possible et honneste.²⁴²

This text, ‘une sorte d’encyclopédie de la foi catholique’,²⁴³ was another useful resource for the laity, providing Catholics with ammunition against Protestantism. Moreover, it indicates Benoist’s close relationship to the laity and a desire to minister to its needs: if anything is bothering the reader, he should let Benoist know, so that he can respond appropriately.²⁴⁴ In fact, Benoist’s own version of the French Bible bound in the same volume as this text carried ‘pernicious

reconnaissance n’ayant plus ceste vigueur et vivacité, qui autre fois a Eclayré le midy de mon aage.’ Benoist, *Declaration*, pp. 27-28.

²⁴² Benoist, *Exposition*, ‘Conclusion de l’auteur du present oeuvre’, fol. 26^r. This work was published on numerous occasions: in Latin, it had been published in a Latin Bible edited by Benoist (see PQ156, PQ19 and Pasquier, p. 89) and was republished in Jacques Lefebvre’s 1573 edition of the same Bible (Pasquier, p. 363); the work appeared as the third of four sections of a text, as originally presented in the Latin Bible (see PQ19); it was also published separately on many occasions as the *Locorum praecipuorum sacrae scripturae* (PQ27) and then in Venice in the seventeenth century with Ricoldus de Montecrucis’ *Propugnaculum fidei* (PQ27). It was translated by Nicholas Chesneau Rethelois (Pasquier, p. 366) and published in the 1566 French Bible and separately as the *Exposition* (PQ165); parts of it were also reproduced in French as the *Refutation des vains pretendus fondemens de certains lieux de l’Ecriture sainte* (PQ142). It was evidently popular. The text changes (it is expanded or sometimes reduced) and covers many topics, defending Catholic doctrine and practice and attacking heretical interpretations through a systematic exegesis of disputed passages; it also contains criticisms of the clergy.

²⁴³ PQ27; Pasquier, p. 123.

²⁴⁴ Benoist invites requests for further explanations in other versions of this text. Pasquier, p. 123 (including n. 1).

distortions' in the form of Protestant translations and interpretations which conflict with his own work in the *Exposition*; the participative response that he sought was active in a way he had not intended as regards his colleagues. At the end of the day, however, his work was principally for the masses; his overall objective was to instruct the laity, as we shall see in the next chapter. In doing this, Benoist did not show complete adherence to any one particular movement; he ministered to the faithful in the way he saw fit, adapting various existing ideas to suit the times and using the scholarship of others – even heretics if required – to achieve his aims. Benoist's Bible venture ultimately proved successful and clearly filled a gap in the market. We continue to explore the theologian's publishing agenda in Chapter 4, in the form of a wider programme to supply the laity with vernacular religious texts beyond the Bible alone; this raised further problems for Benoist, but again, demonstrates an understanding of the laity's requirements in the Counter-Reformation period.

CHAPTER 4

Benoist: Beyond the Bible

Our studies have so far examined the religious and political agenda of Benoist, his approach as a writer and his views concerning the dissemination of Scripture; at the same time, we have observed the theologian's concerns to serve both the French Catholic Church and the masses. In this chapter, we look at evidence beyond that related to the Bible affair which indicates that Benoist aimed to provide this dual service by ensuring that there was a supply of vernacular religious works for the laity; the texts we consider in this section also suggest a keen interest in works popular in the pre-Reformation period.

Firstly, we shall review what appears to have been a broad programme of devotional and didactic works which relate to texts published in the late medieval period and early sixteenth century; saints' lives and the *Grand Ordinaire* are amongst a wide range of material in French. We shall consider Benoist's involvement with these works, in addition to those by humanist and evangelical authors. However, the main focus of this chapter will fall on the most popular of the texts within the theologian's publishing programme, the Book of Hours, and in the second section of this study, we turn to an examination of Books of Hours in France and Benoist's version of this text. Issues raised by the publication of this work will be explored – the 'epitext' surrounding the concept of the Book of Hours and in particular vernacular editions – as well as the text and peritext of Benoist's own translation. Despite the traditional roots of the Book of Hours, providing a French version in the Counter-Reformation period was a potentially controversial act within the Catholic Church: it raised the problematic questions of the legitimacy of prayers, Scripture and quasi-liturgical texts in the vernacular.

The second section of this chapter will analyse the stance taken by Benoist in these areas.

Both sections of Chapter 4 further our understanding of how Benoist secured the delivery of his programme of instruction in practical terms and of how he operated as a writer; just as importantly, the findings point clearly to the influence of certain currents of thought on the theologian. This final chapter shows what Benoist was trying to achieve for the laity with much of his work, his methods, and why he felt his actions were necessary.

1

Instructional works for the laity and their associations with pre-Reformation texts

a) Benoist's publishing programme

Let us firstly establish Benoist's overall publishing programme for the laity and the influences upon it, before turning to study in more detail the nature of Benoist's work on the publications and his assessment of their relative value. In previous chapters, I have intimated that there were indications that the theologian had in mind a programme of vernacular religious instruction which went beyond merely circulating Scripture and, moreover, one which continued trends seen around the beginning of the sixteenth century. This project, outlined by Benoist himself, can be found – although relegated to footnote-level – in Émile Pasquier's biography. He observes

un plan général de Benoist de mettre aux mains des fidèles 'la Bible qui nous enseigne ce que nous devons croire, savoir et faire; les Légendes où nous sommes aidés par les

exemples des saints; et les méditations chrétiennes, surtout du Grand vita Christi, où nous sommes nourris et fortifiés spirituellement'.¹

Jacobus de Voragine's *Golden Legend* and Ludolphus of Saxony's *Vita Christi* were exactly the kinds of texts that had been emerging from the presses around the early 1500s. Belgian and Lyonese editions of Jean de Vignay's fourteenth-century French translation of the *Golden Legend* had been published from around 1475, whilst slightly later in Paris, the demand for the work was so great that the well-known Parisian publisher Anthoine Vérard published five editions within seven years.² If we shift to a slightly later period, Francis Higman records six editions of translations of the *Golden Legend* and four French editions of Ludolphus' work in the period 1511-1551.³

In the latter half of the sixteenth century, Benoist participated in preparing for publication versions of the saints' lives in French and a new translation of the *Vita Christi*. The hagiographical material on which he worked took three forms, none of which were related to the *Golden Legend*. In the first instance, a single-volume edition of saints' lives which had been translated into French by Gabriel Dupuyherbault from the Latin of the Venetian Luigi Lipomano⁴ and others

¹ Pasquier, *Un curé de Paris*, p. 166, n. 1. Pasquier is citing Benoist's *Catéchèses ou instructions touchant les poincts à présent controversés en la religion, accommodées aux evangiles d'un chacun jour de Caresme: proposées en sermons en l'église de S. Eustache à Paris l'an 1573 [...]* (1573) (PQ43). We have already discussed Benoist's Bible activities in some detail in Chapter 3 and therefore the Bible will largely be put to one side in this section.

² Mary Beth Winn, *Anthoine Vérard, Parisian Publisher, 1485-1512: Prologues, Poems, and Presentations* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1997), p. 238; see also Brenda Dunn-Lardeau and Dominique Coq, 'Fifteenth and Sixteenth-Century Editions of the Légende Dorée', *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, 47 (1985), 87-101.

³ *Golden Legend*: V71-76 (1513-1540); *Vita Christi*: L74-77 (1521-1544), in Higman, *Piety and the People*. Although Higman's bibliography begins in 1511, it should be remembered that editions of these texts and those which follow had often been printed before 1511 and in some quantity, as Winn's work suggests for the *Golden Legend* (see note above; see also Dunn-Lardeau and Coq for further details of editions of the *Golden Legend*).

⁴ Luigi Lipomano (1496-1559), Bishop of Verona, enjoyed good relations with his superiors in Rome and participated in some of the proceedings at the Council of Trent. Known for his 'prudence, doctrine and erudition', he was interested in effecting genuine reform within the Catholic Church to halt the spread of Protestantism. His objective as regards saints' lives was to remove the apocryphal elements of the stories; as we shall see, Benoist would later share this aim. See *Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique: Doctrine et histoire*, ed. by M. Viller and others, 17 vols (Paris: Beauchesne, 1937-95), IX (1976), cols 858-60.

appeared in the 1570s.⁵ Following Dupuyherbault's death, the manuscript had fallen into the hands of the publisher Michel de Roigny, who then turned to Benoist as protector in the dedication of the printed version; in the 1577 edition, the dedication to Benoist is followed by the theologian's response, which took the form of peritextual material composed to serve as an introduction to the work.⁶ It seems that Benoist was not satisfied with the hagiographical material and a team was assembled, its members charged with the task of guaranteeing trustworthy entries to the saints' lives, with sources authenticating the stories.⁷ Benoist appears to have supervised the project and acted as editor; his written contribution took the form of the peritext to the work (for instance, dedications and treatises dealing with issues related to saints and saints' lives).⁸ The work was undoubtedly expensive: as with the Dupuyherbault version, it was a folio edition; moreover, this new version came in three volumes. Nevertheless, Pasquier indicates that five different editions were printed in the period 1577 to 1587. Finally, a third more affordable work was published containing the results of the recent hagiographical research; this time, a single-volume folio edition appeared. Eight editions from 1585 to 1607 are listed by Pasquier.⁹ The number of editions indicates that there was a market for these works.

By looking at Pasquier's bibliography, we can see that Benoist wrote numerous dedications to be inserted in the saints' lives, as well as a significant quantity of more substantial peritextual additions, which he often changed.¹⁰ Likewise, his contribution to a new translation of Ludolphus' *Vita Christi* was in the form of the accompanying peritextual material (for instance, he provides the *Traité de*

⁵ PQ53 (1577).

⁶ On this episode, see Pasquier, pp. 164-66. The dedication to Benoist is dated 1572; however, Pasquier does not give details of any editions prior to the 1577 version (Pasquier, p. 339).

⁷ Pasquier, pp. 166-70; PQ54 (1577 onwards).

⁸ Pasquier lists the extensive peritext (see pp. 339-43 (PQ54 and PQ56-66)).

⁹ Pasquier, p. 169; PQ55. Pasquier omits a 1602 edition held in the Bodleian and a 1610 edition, copies of which are preserved in the British Library and the Bodleian. (See my bibliography.)

¹⁰ See PQ54-67. Quotations from some of these works have been used in Chapter 3 and will be used later in this chapter.

cogitation, méditation et contemplation).¹¹ According to Pasquier, Benoist had in fact begun his own translation of the text, although he had been obliged to make way for more urgent matters; he thus expressed his pleasure that the work had been completed by someone else.¹² Again, the work was published in the more expensive folio format, but although it does not seem to have been as popular as the saints' lives, it did appear in at least three separate editions.¹³

The two works discussed above clearly filled a gap in the market; however, as folio editions, it would seem that a wealthier, possibly more educated audience was envisaged. This is not to say that Benoist did not provide religious texts in French for those with more restricted budgets (or indeed those whose level of literacy was not so advanced): he also re-edited the *Grand Ordinaire*, one of the fuller manuals of instruction from the pre-Reformation period and this appeared in the smaller and thus cheaper octavo format.¹⁴ Editions had been published in 1490, 1492, 1502, 1506, 1514, 1530 and 1532; Benoist's 1580 publication came after a gap of nearly fifty years.¹⁵ He published works of different levels of complexity – often both devotional and didactic in nature – for the diverse groupings within the laity. For example, Pasquier classes Benoist's new version of the *Manuel de dévotion* to which Benoist adds prayers and catechistic material as being 'pour les personnes plus instruites'; published in a small, inexpensive form (in-16^o), it was no doubt cheap to purchase.¹⁶ In fact, some of the contents

¹¹ *La Vie de Jésus-Christ*: PQ78; the treatise named above: PQ79; other peritextual material: PQ80-85.

¹² Pasquier, p. 161, n. 6.

¹³ PQ78: 1582 Chesneau edition located by Pasquier. Two different 1599 editions have been located by the St Andrews French Book Project (one published by La Noue, another by Chaudière). The full bibliographical detail provided by St Andrews for the 1599 La Noue version indicates that Benoist was heavily involved in the work, providing additional material and suggesting that he acted as an active editor and reviser of the main work.

¹⁴ *Le Grand Ordinaire ou instruction commune des chrestiens [...] Nouvellement reveu, corrigé, et augmenté, avec trois petits traictez fort utiles en ce temps, à ceux qui desirent vivre chastement, tant en religion que dehors* (1580) (PQ159).

¹⁵ See Francis Higman, 'Theology for the Layman in the French Reformation 1520-1550', in his *Lire et découvrir*, pp. 87-106 (p. 88) and O9-11 in Higman, *Piety and the People*.

¹⁶ Pasquier, p. 161; *Le Manuel de dévotion. Extraict des Escrits des saints Pères et Docteurs illustres, tant anciens que modernes, mis en très bel ordre par M. Simon Verrepé et nouvellement traduit en français par J.-B. et depuis reveu par M. René Benoist. Edition dernière augmentée par*

of this work are similar in several ways to those of the Book of Hours. Benoist's most popular publication, printed in translation in at least forty editions from 1569 to 1646; the figures indicate that this was a work with mass appeal.¹⁷ Benoist thus ensured that vernacular religious works were available for the various types of lay-folk whom he recognised had different needs.

In the area of pre-Reformation texts, in addition to those listed above, it is obvious that Benoist was interested in the work of Jean Gerson, the fifteenth-century chancellor of the University of Paris who had himself been much concerned with lay instruction. Benoist translated at least three treatises by Gerson¹⁸ and quotes Gerson in his own work.¹⁹

Many of the works alluded to above, which are frequently works of popular piety, quite obviously look back to texts from the pre-Reform era, as has been demonstrated by looking at the quantity in which some of these texts appeared earlier in the century. Furthermore, from Winn's bibliography of Vérard, who was operational at the turn of the sixteenth century, it is clear that he published many of the titles which Benoist later produced, although the latter often acted as reviser or editor. For example, Vérard published the *Grant Vita Christi*, the *Legende doree*, the *Ordinaire des crestiens* and a French verse Book of Hours; of course, he was also the first to publish the *Bible historiale*, which brings us back to the most important text in Benoist's programme.²⁰

M. Ar. Sorbin dict de Sainte Foy (1574) (PQ158). Four editions are indicated (1568-1580). A 1575 edition unknown to Pasquier is preserved in Durham's Chapter Library.

¹⁷ Benoist's Book of Hours will be discussed later.

¹⁸ *La Manière et forme de vivre d'un chascun en son état, faite en françois du latin de Gerson* (1579) (PQ183); *Response à ceux qui preschent publiquement et au peuple qui croit que si chacun ouït la messe dévotement, il ne deviendra point aveugle ce jour-là et ne mourra pas de mort subite. Traduite du latin de Jean Gerson* (1579) (PQ184); *Traité de Gerson ou règle adressée à un ermite traduit par René Benoist* (1580) (PQ147). In *Piety and the People*, Higman records seven editions of works by Gerson published between 1511 and 1551 (G14-20, 1519-1547).

¹⁹ For example, in his *Petit fragment catechistic d'une plus ample catechese de la magie reprehensible et des magiciens, pris de l'une des catecheses et opuscules de M. René Benoist* (Paris: Poupy, 1579), pp. 22-23 (PQ70) and in the *Sermon de la disposition requise pour le lavement des pieds [...]* (Paris: Chevallier, 1601), p. 21 (PQ122).

b) Publishing trends earlier in the century; impulses behind the provision of religious texts in the vernacular

Before we consider further Benoist's particular editions of these texts, let us establish the main characteristics of the publishing output of the earlier period in order to identify general trends and to see how typical the kind of texts we have been discussing were. In fact, religious works dominated the presses in the pre-Reform era; it has been estimated that at least 75% of printed texts between 1445 and 1520 were religious in nature.²¹ If we look at the output of those in France in the vernacular from the turn of the century to the 1520s, we see that many of these were works of popular piety evolving out of late medieval traditions and devotional practice. Jennifer Britnell has shown that in France, the publication of religious works in the vernacular for the laity went relatively unchecked before the threat of Lutheranism.²² The quality of the publications varied to suit all purses and works were intended to reach those beyond the literate, with prefaces often addressing those who will 'lire ou ouyr lire'.²³ A variety of both old and new texts were available, including the texts described above, works concerning Mass, manuals of instruction containing the Ten Commandments and Articles of Faith, and more adventurous works such as Church Fathers and, as we saw in Chapter 3, even Scripture. The work of Jean Gerson was particularly popular, as authors aimed similarly to provide works that could teach the laity directly, and also effect renewal within the Church by ensuring that members of the clergy were well instructed and able to deliver effective sermons.²⁴ As Britnell comments:

Everything suggests that the trend towards providing the laity with books in French on religion was one which was gaining in strength during the first twenty years of the

²⁰ Winn, pp. 547-51; on the French verse Hours, Winn, pp. 153-60.

²¹ Jean Delumeau, *Naissance et affirmation de la Réforme*, 5th edn (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1988), p. 70. The percentage appears to relate to texts in Latin and the vernacular.

²² Britnell, *Jean Bouchet*, pp. 190-94.

²³ Britnell, *Jean Bouchet*, p. 190.

²⁴ For more detail on these subjects, see Britnell, *Jean Bouchet*, pp. 190-94.

sixteenth century. It accompanies the efforts towards reformation of the monastic orders which were going on at the same time. Indeed, the parallel is worth pointing out, for the two things often went together. Authors of religious books in French written at the time often came from reformed houses or were themselves reformers. [...] Both trends were as prevalent among conservatives as among more radical reformers.²⁵

Those behind a movement to provide the laity with such works were not necessarily evangelicals or those whom we would consider today as early Reformers. Reformers often criticised these works, which, in terms of theology, provided only a basic explanation of faith and doctrine, although an attempt was also made to help the laity to understand prayers. Nevertheless, these works had prepared the way for the success of the different style of vernacular religious work emanating from Reformers, which included Scriptural translations and more comprehensive explanations of faith. In fact, Reformers sometimes borrowed established titles for more radical texts. It was this, combined with the Reformers' use of Scripture and liturgy, which brought opposition from Catholic theologians to the more traditional works.²⁶

In the light of this assessment of the situation in the pre-Reform era and an examination of the aims and content of Benoist's output in the latter half of the century, it seems that Higman's conclusions in the area of early-printed vernacular religious works require some modification. He characterises early religious texts as predominantly devotional rather than instructive:

Les genres les plus représentés sont les prières, les méditations, les poèmes pieux (*Oraison de notre dame de recouvrance*, *Le Jardin amoureux de l'âme dévote*, *La Fleur de devotion*; Gerson, *La Mendicité spirituelle*), ainsi que la *Bible historiée*, *La Vie de Jésus-Christ*, les vies des saints. Dans la plupart de ces textes, la doctrine est déjà acquise, acceptée; les textes cherchent à la représenter, à la rendre vivante, palpable au croyant.²⁷

'Dans ces genres', Higman comments, 'il ne s'agit pas de comprendre, il s'agit de croire'.²⁸ He argues that 'a significant change in mentality [was] wrought by the

²⁵ Britnell, *Jean Bouchet*, p. 193.

²⁶ Britnell, *Jean Bouchet*, pp. 193-96.

²⁷ Francis Higman, 'Le Levain de l'Évangile', in *Lire et découvrir*, pp. 15-51 (p. 15).

²⁸ Francis Higman, 'Premières réponses catholiques aux écrits de la Réforme, 1525-c.1540', in *Lire et découvrir*, pp. 497-514 (p. 497).

Reformation’;²⁹ that the devotional text popular at the beginning of the century ‘appealing to the heart’ was replaced by ‘the polemical slanging-match’ and doctrinal and confessional works precipitated by the work of Protestants.³⁰ Higman considers early religious works and faith as unquestioning, stable, and displaying simple spirituality; the Reformers are credited with bringing work ‘appealing to the understanding’: Scripture, theological exposition, polemic, instruction, works of various genres – including drama and verse – designed ‘with a view to persuading the reader, to putting over a point of view, to convincing’. He concludes that ‘in terms of reading matter, religion has become unstable, open to debate, and more intellectual than spiritual. ‘Spirituality’ is represented by the editions of the Genevan liturgy (*La Forme des prieres*) and by the ‘hymn-book’ editions of Marot’.³¹ Higman asserts that the victory of the doctrinal over the devotional is seen elsewhere than in printing and that this new intellectual debate in the vernacular helped to effect an evolution of the French language.³²

On the one hand, Higman underestimates the quantity of vernacular religious works published by those within the Catholic Church in the pre-Reform era which appeal to the understanding, such as the *Grand Ordinaire*. On the other, in his bibliography, which begins only in 1511, he appears to overlook the importance of the Book of Hours and does not always include editions of this text, of which French versions were printed throughout the period covered, most notably in the form of the much-published verse translation of Pierre Gringore, which first appeared in around 1525; this text alone shows that the popularity of devotional works continued past the 1520s.³³ Furthermore, the evidently large readership of Benoist’s vernacular editions of devotional works in the latter half of the century demonstrates the demand amongst the masses in the Counter-Reformation period for traditional Catholic texts, many of them appealing to the

²⁹ Higman, *Piety and the People*, pp. 8-18 (p. 10).

³⁰ Higman, *Piety and the People*, pp. 11, 17.

³¹ Higman, *Piety and the People*, p. 18.

³² See, for instance, Higman, *Piety and the People*, pp. 24-30.

³³ Higman does however list the various editions of Gringore’s translation (G48-56, 1525?-1544), *Piety and the People*.

heart. Admittedly, in the intervening years, the threat of Lutheranism and later Protestant movements had restricted the number of works of spirituality in the vernacular by Catholic authors, as well as curbing Erasmian and other pre-Reform currents advocating reform and renewal; few Catholics seemed willing to put out editions of religious texts in French, wary of being labelled heretics. Benoist's work continues that of those within the Catholic Church before the Protestant Reformers posed a serious threat; several of the theologian's works in the vernacular follow traditional devotional trends, whilst ensuring that the devotional experience of the laity when using these texts was grounded in understanding. This would no doubt have been the natural development of these texts at a much earlier stage in the century had it not been for the Reformation.

c) Benoist's work modernising pre-Reformation texts

What then was Benoist's attitude to these texts and their publication? Let us explore the role Benoist played in the publication of these texts, the reasons for revisions and the theologian's opinions of the relative value of the texts.

Benoist was closely associated with the texts in question; even if he is not credited as the author or translator of the main text, his name still takes a prominent position on the title-page and library catalogues tend to attribute the work to him. It is his privilege that appears in the editions of the saints' lives that I have consulted, even after his death. The extent of Benoist's publications and his level of involvement with them indicate his commitment to their use. The theologian frequently acted as editor or reviser, as we have seen; in this role, he was able to maximise the amount of material published in a short period of time, in addition to controlling the contents and overall appearance of the work. Even when he claimed to take on the more time-consuming job of translation, the work could be done swiftly if he carried out this duty in the same spirit displayed when 'translating' the Bible.

The reasons for revisions are fairly straightforward; in some cases, as Pasquier observes, it was simply a matter of updating the work for the modern readership:

Dans la pensée de Benoist, il fallait donc, pour des lecteurs plus exigeants que leurs prédécesseurs, corriger et ‘redresser les anciens recueils de piété, changer les expressions vieilles, couper la robe sans toucher le corps et rogner les ongles sans offenser la chair.’ C’est dans cet esprit qu’il donne une nouvelle édition de deux livres célèbres: *Le grand ordinaire des chrétiens* [...] et les *Heures de Notre-Dame*.³⁴

However, as is shown by his concern, already mentioned, to provide authenticated saints’ lives, he was not satisfied with all the content of works such as the *Golden Legend*; in some cases, more extensive changes were needed. Indeed, the lack of historical rigour in hagiographical material made it an easy target for Reformers, as has been noted elsewhere; it has been observed that ‘of all the vernacular religious literature available at the time, saints’ lives [we]re the most popular in style, ha[d] the least serious theological content, pander[ed] most to sensationalism, and were under the strongest attack from reformers’.³⁵ Benoist freely admitted that hagiographical material had become corrupted with superstition and myth, and perceived that it should be cleaned up:

Car il [Satan] fait abbatre et desmolir les Eglises, les monuments, et les sepulchres des Saints, où Dieu eternal les a approuvez, et leur foy et religion par divers miracles: comme aussi il a faict remplir les escrits, où il estoit faict mention des vies et histoires des Saints, d’infinies choses intolerables, fabuleuses, scandaleuses, et superstitieuses, pour en deguster et retirer de la leçon d’iceux, ceux qui avoient encores quelque desir d’estre sauvez, en suivant et imitant ceux, lesquels il est certain estre bien-heureux, lesquels avec Dieu, autheur et cause de leur sainteté, sont glorifiez, quand on list et recite leurs vies, actions vertueuses, et Legendes.³⁶

We know from previous chapters that Benoist was ready to blame the incompetence of his Catholic colleagues just as much as the work of Protestant heretics for any problems; it seems Benoist was able to create opportunities for polemic regardless of the subject or type of publication at hand. In comments

³⁴ Pasquier, pp. 161-62.

³⁵ Britnell, *Jean Bouchet*, p. 195.

³⁶ *Histoire de la vie, mort, passion et miracles des saints* (1602), ‘Opusculé contenant plusieurs discours de meditation et devotion, utiles pour bien et utilement lire les vies, faicts. miracles, histoires et legendes des saints, et autres livres divins’, fol. ã3^v.

which make his commitment to traditional Catholic texts clear, he yet again underlines the shortcomings of the Catholic Church; this time, he also draws attention to the need to replace heretical ‘bad’ versions of these works:

C'est ce qu'enseigne Jesus Christ, quand il dit, Que l'ennemy a sursemé la zizanie au milieu du bon froment, lors que les hommes dormoient. Ce que nous avons expérimenté les années passées en la Bible, és Legendes des Saints, et au livre dit vulgairement, Le grand ordinaire des Chrestiens, livres à nous delaissez par nos saints Peres, soigneux des choses nécessaires à nostre salut: ausquels iceluy brigand des ames indevotes, ingrates et negligentes, n'a osé toucher, ny les corrompre, ou les s'approprier, cependant que nous avons veillé, les voyans, apprenans, honorans, et pratiquans. Mais depuis que nous nous sommes endormis és choses du monde, estans refroidis en ce qu'est de nostre salut, il a si indignement obscurcy tels livres nécessaires pour nostre salut, que quelques-uns les ont du tout rejettez, ou les ont embrassez avec une indigne et intolerable lourderie, n'y recevant aucune reformation ou correction: comme aussi les autres les voulans plus nets, ils y ont prins le poison et le mensonge de satan, lequel se prevalant de leur presumptueuse curiosité, il leur a baillé de mauvaises Bibles, des mauvaises Legendes, et de mauvais et dangereux Catechismes, sous le pretexte d'une elegante et pure verité et reformation.³⁷

It is interesting to note that as well as making the practicality of his work clear (his versions can obviously replace the heretical counterparts), Benoist seems to point to the refusal of his predecessors and colleagues to correct these texts even linguistically. However, he plainly does not approve of their fate at the hands of Reformers.

Although Benoist values the pre-Reformation texts, it is evident that the most important text for him was the Bible, which he believed served a function no other text could. In the peritextual material to his 1602 saints' lives, one theme remains a constant: saints' lives are important, but they are secondary and play a different role from that of Scripture:

Cela a faict que Dieu eternal amateur des hommes, et desirieux de leur salut, heur et perfection, qui consiste en une vraye cognoissance, et en une entiere adhesion charitable et devote de luy mesme, leur a baillé par son saint Esprit, et par personnages vertueux ses organes, la Bible, qui est la sainte Escriture comprise au vieil, et au nouveau Testament, livre certes qui est la nourriture, la force et l'entiere consolation des esleus de Dieu, et leur assurée victoire contre satan et tout son mensonge: Comme aussi les Legendes, qui sont

³⁷ *Histoire de la vie, mort, passion et miracles des saints* (1602), 'Advertissement au Lecteur touchant la presente impression', fol. 13^v.

les vies, les actions et les histoires des Saints: afin qu'ils eussent la science et la cognoissance par l'un, et l'excitation par l'autre.³⁸

By 1602, the theologian had officially rejected his particular French Bible, but his enthusiasm for vernacular Bibles does not seem to have waned; the Bible is described as the 'Legende à la verité dorée'³⁹ (a reference to the *Golden Legend*), and Benoist includes the following tribute to Scripture:

[...] la sainte, sacrée et divine Bible, en laquelle sans admixtion d'aucune fable, mensonge ou faulseté, choses veritables, et qui doivent estre tenuës et creuës, asseurement de tous, sont proposées. O divine, tres-utile et necessaire Histoire, vraye et abondante mer de toutes veritables Histoires [...]⁴⁰

It is in the peritext to this hagiographical material that Benoist takes the cautious position described in the final section of Chapter 3: the Bible is not for indiscriminate distribution amongst the laity. However, his praise of Scripture indicates his enthusiasm for it; he can openly provide saints' lives, but really his greatest interest lies in the Bible.

d) Benoist and humanist and evangelical works

Let us conclude this review of Benoist's associations with currents witnessed earlier in the sixteenth century by examining his reception of humanist and evangelical authors. We have noted above that Lutheranism put a brake on vernacular religious works from Catholic authors and on the activities of

³⁸ *Histoire de la vie, mort, passion et miracles des saints* (1602), 'Au tres-chrestien et tres-victorieux Roy de France, et de Navarre Henry III', fol. ã2^r. As explained in Chapter 3 and can be seen from discussions earlier in this chapter, some peritextual material in Benoist's saints' lives is not reused whilst other texts appear in various editions; the peritext to the 1602 saints' lives does not necessarily date from that year. However, whilst Benoist was alive, we can presume that the theologian had influence over what was and what was not included in each edition; the material in the 1602 edition, whether recycled or not, thus reflects his position at the time of publication.

³⁹ *Histoire de la vie, mort, passion et miracles des saints* (1602), 'Opuscul des histoires chrestiennes, vies, et legendes des saints, comme aussi du moyen qu'il faut tenir pour les divulguer, et pour y profiter en les lisant, selon la foy, tradition et moeurs de l'Eglise catholique, apostolique et romaine, prins du livre ou tome des opusculs de N. M. René Benoist [...]', Chapter V, fol. ã5^v.

humanist and evangelical groups advocating reform and renewal. Within the Catholic Church, opinions that challenged Church practices became increasingly difficult to maintain as schismatic groups gained momentum. However, Benoist's call for ecclesiastical reform and his enthusiasm for Scripture in the vernacular clearly echo and continue the work of humanists and evangelicals; we saw in Chapter 3 that the theologian was influenced by their ideas, but adapted them to fit the Counter-Reformation landscape. Let us now explore further Benoist's contact with humanist and evangelical thought by studying certain of the titles amongst his publications and views expressed in his writing.

Benoist showed an interest in humanist works at the beginning of his career. One of his earliest publications, an edition of a text by Marsilio Ficino (*De Religione Christiana*),⁴¹ led John Durkan to label Benoist 'not scholastic but Platonist in outlook'.⁴² Durkan also describes a work of Benoist's as echoing Erasmus in certain respects.⁴³ Furthermore, the theologian had evidently looked at the work of the evangelical group at Meaux; one of his treatises was published with a treatise by Pierre Caroli;⁴⁴ he also edited a work by Martial Mazurier which had been condemned by the Faculty of Theology in 1550.⁴⁵ Caroli and Mazurier, both doctors of Theology and both preachers at Meaux, ran into problems with the Faculty of Theology on several occasions and were viewed as suspect.⁴⁶ It was

⁴⁰ *Histoire de la vie, mort, passion et miracles des saints* (1602), 'Opuscul des histoires chrestiennes', Chapter III, fol. ã4^v.

⁴¹ PQ155 (1559).

⁴² John Durkan, 'The Library of Mary, Queen of Scots', in *Mary Stewart: Queen in Three Kingdoms*, ed. by Lynch, pp. 71-104 (p. 87).

⁴³ PQ164: *The Necessare and Assurit Way to Pluk Awa Al Discord in Religion*, trans. by Ninian Winzet (1565); Durkan, p. 88. This is a Scots translation of a Latin treatise written by Benoist and published in 1562 (PQ5). Winzet, like Benoist, was at one time part of the household of Mary, Queen of Scots. The treatise was translated into French at a later date (PQ164).

⁴⁴ PQ37: *Deux traictez esquels il est monstré que la confession sacramentelle, dicte vulgairement auriculaire, est de droict divin: L'un est de maistre René Benoist Angevin Docteur régent à Paris. L'autre de maistre Pierre Caroli, aussi en son vivant docteur en Theologie audict Paris* (1567; 1568).

⁴⁵ PQ168: *Instruction et doctrine utile et nécessaire pour bien et salutairement se confesser et prier Dieu pour ses péchés [...] composée premièrement par Martial Masurier, docteur régent en la Faculté de Théologie, chanoine et pénitencier de Paris, et puis corrigée et dressée selon la forme de l'Eglise catholique par René Benoist* (1565).

⁴⁶ See Thierry Wanegffelen's work on Caroli and Mazurier: both are in his 'nicodemite' section (c.1520-c.1550): on Caroli, who vacillated between Rome and Geneva, pp. 37-47; on Mazurier,

Mazurier who had apparently claimed that ‘où Luther a bien dit, homme n’a mieux dit; et où il a mal dit, homme n’a pis dit’.⁴⁷ In the Mazurier text later edited by Benoist, Mazurier writes of the need for confession to God, making no reference to the sacrament of penance.⁴⁸ Higman notes that Benoist claims to have ‘raboté et limé cest ouvrage au paravant scabreux et nuisible’, but in fact makes no changes; he instead adds an *epistre* in which he explains the Faculty’s censure and provides a treatise on confession correcting Mazurier’s omissions, in the introduction of which he underlines ‘the counterproductive aspect of censorship’.⁴⁹

Of course, it should be remembered that Caroli, Mazurier and the other members of the Meaux circle were active at a time when rupture was not necessarily the intent, as the following comment by Higman underlines:

Il s’agissait, pour Lefèvre, pour Roussel, pour Caroli, pour Mazurier, non pas d’ériger une doctrine ‘nouvelle’ en face de la doctrine ‘catholique’ de la Sorbonne; au contraire, il fallait faire triompher la doctrine évangélique (ils n’auraient jamais dit ‘luthérienne’) sur les hérésies de la Sorbonne.⁵⁰

The main thrust of evangelical works was thus to advocate renewal as opposed to schism and, as we have observed, Benoist was indeed committed to renewal within the Church. It is also important to recall that despite Benoist’s connection with a work that was condemned by the Faculty of Theology, our previous findings confirm that he was in no way heterodox. His polemic leaves little doubts as to his view of Protestantism and in terms of publications, his name is equally associated with those of Counter-Reformation authors Christophe de

who remained within the Catholic Church, pp. 47-52. Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome ni Genève*. For the numerous accounts of their dealings with the Faculty of Theology, see Farge, *Orthodoxy and Reform*, principally p. 45, n.189, and pp. 161, 171-73, 175, 183-85, 198, 237, 257-59.

⁴⁷ See, for instance, Francis Higman, ‘Farel, Calvin, et Olivétan, sources de la spiritualité gallicane’, in *Lire et découvrir*, pp. 155-68 (p. 155).

⁴⁸ See Higman, *Censorship and the Sorbonne*, pp. 105-6 (p. 106).

⁴⁹ Higman, *Censorship and the Sorbonne*, p. 106.

⁵⁰ Francis Higman, ‘Les Traductions françaises de Luther, 1524-1550’, in *Lire et découvrir*, pp. 201-32 (p. 212). Whilst discussing those Catholics willing to participate in transconfessional borrowings, Higman points out that Mazurier, Benoist, Claude d’Espence and Claude de Saintes all studied at the Collège de Navarre. Is this more than a coincidence? Higman, ‘Luther, Calvin et les docteurs’, in *Lire et découvrir*, pp. 305-20 (p. 320).

Cheffontaines,⁵¹ Gabriel Dupuyherbault,⁵² Gentian Hervet,⁵³ and Arnaud Sorbin,⁵⁴ of the anti-Calvinist Willem Van der Lindt⁵⁵ and, from an earlier generation, Catholic preacher François Le Picart, who, although we have seen described in more progressive terms than many of his colleagues in Chapter 3, was exiled from Paris in 1533 at the same time as Noël Bédard, after reports that he had accused Marguerite de Navarre's husband of heresy.⁵⁶

The variety of works published by Benoist indicates several objectives. He aimed to destroy the reformist opposition by supplying polemic that attacked Protestants and didactic and devotional works that replaced those of the Calvinists. At the same time, the theologian turned to late medieval, Gallican, humanist and evangelical ideas to bring about spiritual renewal within the Catholic Church: he aimed to achieve this by providing the laity with certain types of instructional work in the vernacular. He also used traditional anti-clerical complaints to hasten ecclesiastical reform. Admittedly, Benoist's involvement with the humanist and evangelical texts discussed above does not match the level of commitment shown to works such as the Book of Hours which had evolved out of earlier, late medieval trends; whether this was because it was too controversial to pursue this enterprise further or because his interest had genuinely waned, we cannot know. However, it is noticeable that his involvement with the humanist and evangelical works does not appear to have gone beyond the end of the 1560s; after this time, Benoist was fully occupied with the repercussions of publishing a French Bible,

⁵¹ PQ52: a published sermon by Benoist accompanied by a treatise drawn up by Cheffontaines from another sermon (1577).

⁵² PQ53: the first version of the hagiographical material referred to above (1577).

⁵³ PQ30: Hervet's French translation of the proceedings at Trent, accompanied by Benoist's *Brief discours de l'autorité des Conciles généraux* (1566). Pasquier's bibliography indicates further editions in 1573, 1583, 1584, 1603, 1606, 1665, 1683 and 1704; Higman suggests that Hervet's work had been published by 1564 and that there were at least ten editions before the end of the century (Higman, 'Theology in French', in *Lire et découvrir*, pp. 353-70 (p. 360)).

⁵⁴ PQ158: *Le Manuel de dévotion* referred to above (1568 onwards). Higman reviews briefly certain of the texts by these Catholic writers, including works by Benoist, in Higman, 'Theology in French', pp. 356-61.

⁵⁵ PQ141: Benoist's translation of Van der Lindt's *Discours en forme de dialogue, ou histoire tragique* (1566; 1568; 1570).

⁵⁶ PQ162: Benoist provided a preface to a posthumous collection of Le Picart's sermons and *instructions chrétiennes* (1566). On Le Picart's exile, see Farge, pp. 202-03.

not to mention bringing to fruition the other facets of his instructional programme. Moreover, he had become the *curé* of the populous parish of St Eustache, a demanding job, and, on a larger stage, political and religious tensions were no doubt at heightened levels. Yet it seems unconvincing to suggest that these were the passing interests of a young man that he then left behind; by 1559, when he published the Ficino text, he was already 38 years old. Of course, Benoist's activities promoting spiritual renewal have some resonance with the objectives of another movement in the second half of the sixteenth century – the Jesuits. But then Ignatius de Loyola and his *Spiritual Exercises* were equally influenced by devotional works such as the *Golden Legend* and the *Vita Christi*.⁵⁷

Before we conclude this section, it should be remembered that Benoist did not wholeheartedly embrace all genres of literature written by evangelicals. He did not, for instance, consider the work of Rabelais and Marot as edifying, as we saw in the previous chapter with his apparent concerns about nuns who were reading the books of 'un atheiste Rabelais', 'un dissolu Marot' and 'impudiques poetastres', rather than the Bible or Breviary. However, he is undoubtedly referring to the secular nature of the targeted texts and their 'dubious' doctrine, as opposed to the evangelical content. He brackets Rabelais with other undesirables elsewhere⁵⁸ and repeatedly vilifies 'poetastres' and 'escrivains lascifs'.⁵⁹ More generally, the theologian attacks poets, grammarians, and 'philosophes'.⁶⁰ If several of these examples relate only to the literature read within restricted groups

⁵⁷ A. G. Dickens, *The Counter Reformation* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1968), p. 20.

⁵⁸ For instance, Benoist talks of 'un abhominable Martial ou un atheiste Rabelais, ou quelque'un des execrables Poëtes lascifs, corruption de nostre temps'. He alleges that these and a host of other 'auteurs prophanes' are preferred in sermons to prophets, apostles and other holy and learned Christians. René Benoist, *Quadri-partit. Contenant quatre charitables et notables advertissemens, pour appaiser Dieu, et avoir une paix bonne et asseurée. 1. Pour le peuple. 2. Pour les ecclesiastiques. 3. Pour la noblesse. 4. Pour les magistrats* (Troyes: Moreau, 1595), p. 8.

⁵⁹ For example, Benoist criticises the kinds of books which are read by some members of the court instead of the Bible and holy books; he suggests that court members prefer to read the books of 'quelque moqueur atheiste, ou de quelque voluptuaire et libertin Poetastre'. René Benoist, *Brieve et facile refutation d'un livret divulgé au nom de J. de L'Espine, se disant ministre de la parole de Dieu: auquel violentant et detorquant l'Escripture sainte, il blaspheme malheureusement le saint sacrifice evangelique, dict vulgairement la Sainte Messe* (Paris: Chaudière, 1565), p. 9.

such as nuns and the court – and, one suspects, these groups are by implication being singled out for censure – Benoist also berates the irreligious ‘poetes lascifs’, instruments of Satan sponsored by the great and the good, whose works make all parties suffer; his targets are not named, but presumably include the Pléiade, as the reference to fables and poetic lies in some of his writing indicates.⁶¹

Conclusion

Benoist frequently condemns ‘bad’ books (‘livres de charnalité, d’atheisme, de libertinage, de risées, d’heresies, de mensonges, et de choses prophanes du tout contraires à icelle divine parole’) that he claims are popular and held in regard, their authors favoured, whilst sacred texts (‘esquels est contenue la vivifiante et salutaire parole de Dieu, soit en theoricque ou en pratique’) are abandoned and spurned by many.⁶² This is perhaps a commonplace, but his insistence that ‘bad’

⁶⁰ For instance, René Benoist, *Premier livre de la communion des saints, auquel il est traicté de l’honneur que les esleus de Dieu icy mortelz, doyvent faire aux saints vivans et glorieux au ciel* (Paris: Chaudière, 1565), fol. 12^r.

⁶¹ ‘O pauvre peuple, tu endures beaucoup! mais c’est tresjustement, par ce que tu n’as pas voulu obeir et recognoistre Dieu eternal, en la main duquel est le coeur des Roys, lequel il tourne la part qu’il luy plaist, faisant regner les hypocrites pour punir les pechez du peuple, pour lequel est ordonnee toute superiorité, tant Ecclesiastique que seculiere. **Or le commun et vulgaire, plus Juif que Chrestien, n’apprehende que le mal temporel et corporel, sans regarder, sans cognoistre et sans apprehender nostre mal spirituel, beaucoup plus dangereux, en ignorances, erreurs, heresies, superstitions, atheïsmes et idolatries fondees en fables et impietez de mensonges, que mettent en avant par la faveur des grands du monde les poëtes lascifs, trespérnicieux organes de Sathan, et empoisonneurs des coeurs des mondains et charnels, lesquels souvent mesurans les arcanes et mysteres de la religion Chrestienne au pied des fables et mensonges poetiques, ils n’ont estimé non plus de l’un que de l’autre, estans souvent de toutes et de nulle religion, servant en choses externes et en apparence extérieure à Dieu, lequel ils ne cognoissent ny ne recognoissent en leur coeur et conversation, estans ceux desquels il est parlé au Pseau. 13. et 52. lesquels prennent la religion Chrestienne comme si c’estoit une fable, en usant politiquement seulement, et nullement sincerement et salutairement, ayans les hommes que Dieu leur a soumis, non comme freres et libres, ains comme serfs, esclaves et bestes, lesquels mesmes ils privent souvent de nourriture suffisante et necessaire.** René Benoist, *Notables resolutions des presens differens de la religion: prononcees par diverses predications, en plus de cinquante caresmes, preschez tant en ce royaume, que hors iceluy. Le tout dressé sur chacun jour de caresme* (Paris: Chevallier, 1608), II, ‘De la cause et du remede des miseres presentes, fort propre pour le temps de Caresme’, 449-50. My highlighting.

⁶² Benoist, *Quadri-partit*, pp. 3-4.

texts should be replaced by the kind of works he is supplying is no doubt due to genuine commitment to the titles on his own publishing agenda. Even if his role was that of editor as opposed to the more onerous duty of translator, the extent of his programme – and peritextual contributions – suggests that a significant amount of time and energy was expended. In fact, the disapproval of other works and the advancement of his own could be seen as a sixteenth-century promotional campaign of which Benoist was prepared to be the figurehead; he appears to have made an extensive publishing programme materialise almost single-handedly. However, as we have noted in previous chapters, the theologian's success could only continue because his ideas met with sympathy in at least some high places and because of considerable support from the laity.

Benoist's work demonstrates flexibility, an understanding of the need to adapt and evolve, as well as to acknowledge the usefulness of traditional texts. Well-loved religious works in the vernacular were not to be forgotten and suppressed merely because heretics worked in French. Practically speaking, they were beneficial in the fight against Protestantism: they replaced heretical versions of similar texts. The theologian published these works after modernising them, ridding them of archaisms, an old-fashioned appearance, and superstitious elements which had accumulated in late medieval times. Although few other Catholic authors appear to have been working along similar lines, Benoist was quite clearly responding to the needs of the laity; the various texts he provided were very popular.

The theologian recognised the need to help his own Church to evolve, as had humanists and other groups earlier in the century; renewal within the Catholic Church would revitalise it and strengthen its position so that it could oppose Protestantism and serve Christians well. These objectives are in line with the Counter-Reformation spirit and his aims to bring about a renewal of piety bear some similarities to those of the Jesuits; his criticism of clerical abuses and superstitions said to come from the medieval Catholic Church is reminiscent of

certain post-Tridentine movements. However, above all, Benoist's particular sympathies appear to be closest to those of pre-Reformation thinkers operating in France at the beginning of the century, as the results of this section have indicated.

2

Benoist and the French Book of Hours

The Book of Hours fits into several of the categories discussed above, as we have already seen; a traditional work of popular piety, it was in wide circulation in the pre-Reformation period in France and was published in the vernacular both at this early stage and then by Benoist later in the century. Nevertheless, as Albert Labarre observes, the evolution of this text is poorly understood; most studies concentrate on finely decorated manuscript Hours and few have shown any interest for printed Hours after the middle of the sixteenth century.⁶³ The work of Virginia Reinburg has begun to correct this deficit,⁶⁴ although Labarre's suggestion that 'nous soupçonnons mal l'intensité de la diffusion des livres d'Heures au 16e siècle et les traces que cette intensité a laissées dans la mémoire collective des siècles suivants'⁶⁵ is still largely accurate.

This study examines the text and peritext of the first editions of Benoist's vernacular Hours – a Latin-French and French-only version – published in 1569. Scriptural translations included in the theologian's versions of this work will be

⁶³ *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, VII (1968), cols 410-31 (cols 410-11, 423). Entry by Albert Labarre.

⁶⁴ See, for instance, Virginia Reinburg, 'Popular Prayers in Late Medieval and Reformation France' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Princeton University, 1985); 'Prayer and the Book of Hours', in Roger S. Wieck and others, *Time Sanctified: The Book of Hours in Medieval Art and Life* (New York: George Braziller, 1988), pp. 39-44; 'Hearing Lay People's Prayer', in *Culture and Identity in Early Modern Europe (1500-1800): Essays in Honor of Natalie Zemon Davis*, ed. by Barbara B. Diefendorf and Carla Hesse (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, [c.1993]), pp. 19-39; 'Books of Hours', in *The Sixteenth-Century French Religious Book*, ed. by Andrew Pettegree, Paul Nelles and Philip Conner (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), pp. 68-82.

examined, as well as the overall presentation of his two publications and his peritextual additions (mostly in the form of *advertissements*) found throughout the Hours. Analysing these different elements reveals further Benoist's editorial techniques and the objectives which lie behind his work, as well as indicating the position he adopts on several controversial issues, such as the question of prayers in the vernacular. Although the focus here lies on Benoist's Hours, this study also sketches in the background of early-printed Hours and the printed Hours in French that preceded Benoist's, including the debate (or 'epitext') surrounding these texts, so that we may better appreciate the influences that operated on the theologian and the challenges that he faced when publishing his work. The results of this section derive from the examination and comparison of a large number of Books of Hours from the beginnings of printed Hours in the late 1400s through to the editions of the early 1600s; the findings highlight similarities and differences with Benoist's work and underline the implications of his actions. In addition to analysing the many issues raised by the theologian's own publications, this section thus also seeks to convey several of the wider issues raised by Books of Hours – in particular vernacular Hours – and by Benoist's involvement with this text.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, VII, col. 411.

⁶⁶ Much of this contextualisation is essential because of the lack of work by historians on printed French Hours. However, Reinburg has provided a brief review of the changing nature and use of printed Hours in sixteenth-century France, with interesting statistical analyses. See Reinburg. 'Books of Hours'.

I) Context and epitext

a) The Book of Hours: contents and use

Hours were the ‘late medieval best-seller’;⁶⁷ even as manuscripts, they ‘were among the first books to be efficiently mass-produced’ in workshops ‘geared [...] to production-line methods’.⁶⁸ We often think of Hours as the preserve of the wealthy nobility – particularly noble laywomen – but by this point, the price would have been within the reach of many more, especially if few pictures, and of indifferent quality, were provided.⁶⁹ With the transition of Hours to the printed form, this trend continued; a range of Hours was produced to meet the differing purse-sizes of a wide clientele.

By the fifteenth century and the appearance of the printing press, Books of Hours were largely fixed in content, although the order sometimes varied.⁷⁰ The contents are usually categorised after the manner introduced by Victor Leroquais:⁷¹ the calendar, Hours of the Virgin, Penitential Psalms, Litany, Office of the Dead and Suffrages of the Saints constitute the ‘essential’ texts derived from the Breviary; the Sequences (passages from the four Gospels), John’s account of the Passion, the prayers ‘Obsecro te’ and ‘O intemerata’ to the Virgin Mary, additional Offices such as the Hours of the Cross and Hours of the Holy

⁶⁷ L. M. J. Delaissé, ‘The Importance of Books of Hours for the History of the Medieval Book’, in *Gatherings in Honor of Dorothy E. Miner*, ed. by Ursula E. McCracken, Lilian M. C. Randall and Richard H. Randall Jr (Baltimore, MD: Walters Art Gallery, [1974]), pp. 203-25 (p. 203).

⁶⁸ Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England c.1400-c.1580* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 211; see also Reinburg, ‘Books of Hours’, p. 71.

⁶⁹ For example, W. A. Pantin demonstrates the role played by Hours in the everyday life of a fifteenth-century English layman. See W. A. Pantin, ‘Instructions for a Devout and Literate Layman’, in *Medieval Learning and Literature: Essays Presented to Richard William Hunt*, ed. by J. J. G. Alexander and M. T. Gibson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), pp. 398-422.

⁷⁰ Books of Hours were ordered according to a certain rite or Use. The Use, the ‘distinctive form of prayer and ritual followed in a particular church or diocese’ can be ascertained by studying the ‘variations in the text of certain prayers’. John Harthan, *Books of Hours and their Owners* ([London]: Thames and Hudson, 1977), p. 19. In France, printed Hours usually adopted the Use of Rome; this was followed in popularity by the Use of Paris. On the other hand, in England, the Use of Sarum was widespread.

Spirit, the Fifteen Joys of the Virgin and the Seven Requests to the Saviour are known as 'secondary' texts; finally, the Fifteen Gradual Psalms, the Psalter of St Jerome, and a variety of prayers form the 'accessory' texts.⁷² In manuscript Hours, the texts are usually given in Latin, sometimes with headings provided in French, although gradually certain texts began to appear in the vernacular, particularly additional prayers. The level of understanding of the reader undoubtedly varied greatly and is difficult to establish today. The laity's comprehension and whether or not lay-folk understood the prayers became a point of controversy in the sixteenth century. However, beyond the repetition of the Latin texts, much could also be gained from the contemplation of the images, both in terms of spiritual and aesthetic satisfaction. As Reinburg underlines, a literate experience was not necessarily implied:

As a devotional object the book of hours is located at the intersection of literate and not necessarily literate religious experience – particularly the visual, aural and tactile dimensions of devotional practice. Owners of books of hours sometimes pasted or sewed amulets, pilgrim badges and medallions inside their books. Both manuscript and printed prayer books usually included devotional images.⁷³

A standard set of images had been assembled by the fifteenth century for certain points of the text – for example, the Annunciation scene would usually commence the Hours of the Virgin, placed at the head of Matins – although variations sometimes appeared.

Historians have pointed to several reasons to explain the popularity of this prayer-book, and particularly the Hours of the Virgin, which contained various psalms, hymns, prayers and readings designed to be recited every day at the appropriate canonical hours. It has been suggested that the work provided the opportunity for the devout laity to recreate monastic piety and its 'order and tranquillity' and that

⁷¹ V. Leroquais, *Les Livres d'Heures manuscrits de la Bibliothèque nationale*, 3 vols (Paris: [Mâcon, impr. Protat], 1927).

⁷² Harthan, pp. 14-15. See also Wieck, *Time Sanctified*, pp. 45-136, 157-67 and Roger S. Wieck, *Painted Prayers: The Book of Hours in Medieval and Renaissance Art* (New York: George Braziller, 1997), pp. 26-132. Wieck's work provides a thorough examination of the images found in manuscript Books of Hours around the various texts listed above.

⁷³ Reinburg, 'Books of Hours', p. 71.

some of the psalms within the Hours were appealing in that they were accessible and had a 'humane and tender tone'. Of course, the Hours' attraction lay also in the fact that it was simple to use, with little adaptation necessary throughout the year.⁷⁴

The Book of Hours was a part of everyday life, most certainly for women; it was used for personal devotions in the home and taken to church to use during the Mass.⁷⁵ It was indispensable to the faithful on a daily basis because the work showed how the good Christian should conduct himself in life and, most importantly, death. As Reinburg emphasises, the medieval laity's immediate concern for praying was personal salvation and the salvation of others; although no doubt true, few would have alluded to the 'stillness, attentiveness, and peace' gained from praying and using their Hours, nor the 'physical and psychic space for solitude and contemplation' that could arise from their use.⁷⁶

The prayers in a Book of Hours were addressed to various members of the celestial court (God, Mary or one from a wide range of saints), allowing the devotee to establish a private, interior relationship with the addressee.⁷⁷ In fact, the use of the word 'court' is appropriate; the framework constructed by the populating of the late medieval Hours with 'personalities' such as saints formed a parallel to the hierarchical structures in place at the time and therefore an order to which all could relate.⁷⁸ Of course, the appeal of the Book of Hours was also related to the Virgin's wide popularity in the late medieval period; the cult of the

⁷⁴ Duffy, p. 210.

⁷⁵ Women were still closely associated with Books of Hours in the second half of the sixteenth century; the *Petite instruction et maniere de vivre pour une femme seculiere*, written by a nun in the early 1500s, can be found in Books of Hours published in the 1560s and 1570s (see, for instance, [Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: Ricoart, 1566), (BL C.47.c.16(2)) and [Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: Merlin, [1571?]), (BL C.30.i.4(2))). The author, who dispenses advice on the laywoman's devotional life, refers to women taking their Books of Hours to Mass (see, for example, fol. A2^v of the *Petite instruction* in BL C.30.i.4(2)). See also Jennifer Britnell, 'The Patroness and the Poet: The Religious Allegories of Gabrielle de Bourbon and Jean Bouchet', *Journal of the Early Book Society*, 4 (2001), 127-49 (p.146, n. 67).

⁷⁶ Reinburg, 'Prayer and the Book of Hours', p. 44.

⁷⁷ Reinburg, 'Books of Hours', pp. 69-70.

Virgin Mary and the many qualities and powers with which she had been endowed by this stage are well known.⁷⁹ Mary's intercession, once gained, was thought to be highly effective.

The genuine devotion with which people used their prayer-books is beyond question, however some modern commentators may feel about the atmosphere of the late medieval period. The religious tendencies have, for instance, been described as 'saccharine' and 'self-indulgent', the religious climate 'a consequence of the diffusion of beliefs and practices from the quiet of the cloister and the relative sobriety of the chateau to the marketplace'.⁸⁰ As regards the evolution of devotional practice, A. N. Galpern finds that, at least for Champagne, 'important indicators of [...] late-medieval piety reached their apogee at the turn of the sixteenth century' at which point 'Huizinga's vision of "the extreme saturation of the religious atmosphere, and a marked tendency of thought to embody itself in images" [can] be recognised fully'.⁸¹ According to Galpern, the 'Indian summer of late-medieval piety in the decades around 1500' is attested to by, amongst other things, the popularity of the Book of Hours; the historian notes that 'the printing press multiplied the books of Hours, most of which were printed between 1485 and 1530'.⁸²

⁷⁸ For a discussion of this concept, the evolution of the framework, and its 'masculinisation' following the work of Luther and the Reformers, see Reinburg, 'Hearing Lay People's Prayer'.

⁷⁹ See Elizabeth A. Johnson, 'Marian Devotion in the Western Church', in *Christian Spirituality: High Middle Ages and Reformation*, ed. by Jill Raitt (New York: Crossroad, 1988), pp. 392-414.

⁸⁰ A. N. Galpern, *The Religions of the People in Sixteenth-Century Champagne* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), pp. 90-91.

⁸¹ Galpern, p. 91; Johan Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, trans. by F. Hopman (London: E. Arnold, 1924).

⁸² Galpern, p. 90.

b) Early-printed Books of Hours

i) Latin editions

Let us now consider the early-printed Latin editions as they provide the essential point of reference for vernacular Hours.⁸³ Once printed Hours had established themselves on the market, the successors of and initially rivals to manuscript Hours were not dissimilar from the latter in appearance.⁸⁴ Printers and publishers, as with other early-printed texts, attempted to recreate their manuscript counterparts to pander to the traditionalist in the readership, but, of course, it should also be remembered that no other model for book production was available. The mention of late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century Hours calls to mind those uniformly printed in gothic type, which have been relatively well researched, particularly for their presentational aspects.⁸⁵ In the period to 1520, Parisian publishers such as Anthoine Vérard, Simon Vostre, Philippe Pigouchet and the Hardouyn brothers dominated the market. Vellum is employed for expensive copies, paper for cheaper editions; the text is predominantly in Latin, perhaps with some rubrics and selected prayers at the back in the vernacular; an

⁸³ At present, there are two main bibliographical sources of information on fifteenth and sixteenth-century Books of Hours. The most useful in terms of the provision of details is Paul Lacombe's bibliography (Paul Lacombe, *Livres d'Heures imprimés au XVe et au XVIe siècle conservés dans les bibliothèques publiques de Paris: Catalogue* (Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1963)); this covers editions of Hours in Parisian public libraries, as the title indicates. Overall categorisation is by town of publication, with Latin and vernacular texts listed together; detail of varying length is given under each entry. Hanns Bohatta's bibliography (Hanns Bohatta, *Bibliographie der Livres d'Heures (Horae B.M.V.), Officia, Hortuli Animae, Coronae B.M.V., Rosaria und Cursus B.M.V. des XV. und XVI. Jahrhunderts* (Vienna: Gilhofer & Ranschburg, 1909)) gives a straightforward list. The works are divided by Use, with shortened title and scant, if any, detail; Latin and French texts are again listed together, with no indication of the language of the editions. No thorough bibliography yet exists like that of Bettye Chambers for early-printed French Bibles and, as we have noted previously, Higman's *Piety and the People* does not always include Books of Hours, not even those entirely in French.

⁸⁴ In this section, I describe the more attractive Hours typically found in libraries today, although much simpler editions can be found; these were often printed at an early stage and have little or no decoration (several of these originate from outside of France in Italy). Of course, it is important to remember that the better quality printed Hours are more likely to have been preserved; this is true too of manuscripts. The overwhelming interest in more expensive manuscript and printed Hours rather than cheaper editions has no doubt skewed our image of Hours and their use.

increasing number of woodcut illustrations and elaborate borders decorate the pages, displaying religious and secular images.⁸⁶ It is commonplace to find pictures of contemporary scenes of peasants at work and play and, at the beginning of the Hours, a depiction of the astrological man, part of the medical beliefs in this period, of course. The calendar is often accompanied with the picture of an activity (work or play) appropriate to that month and the astrological sign, in addition to a quatrain, sometimes in French. French quatrains (frequently 'recycled' in Hours) might also introduce the various Hours of the Virgin; they are printed under the illustration usually present, which serves as a bookmark. Apart from possibly inappropriate illustration, sometimes 'superstitious' prayers are included and inflated indulgences promised for the repetition of certain prayers.⁸⁷ However, as Reinburg has shown, prayers thought of as superstitious in prayer-books are nearly always handwritten additions and, as she comments, 'in some ways [...] [they] differ little from the other prayer-texts in Books of Hours.

⁸⁵ A general introduction to printed Hours can be found in Harthan, pp. 169-74. For examples of the images in these editions, see Félix Soleil, *Les Heures gothiques et la littérature pieuse aux XVe et XVIe siècles* (Rouen: Augé, 1882).

⁸⁶ Some secular images had little relevance. Erotic images had appeared in manuscript Hours for some time (on those in manuscripts, see Delaissé, p. 208); for instance, it became popular to place a picture of an increasingly scantily-clad Bathsheba bathing herself at the start of the Penitential Psalms. According to Paul Saenger, 'these erotic scenes achieved their zenith in manuscripts produced at the very end of the fifteenth century and in the first decade of the sixteenth century. They even began to permeate printed books, only to be eliminated in the austere new books of hours produced in the period following the Council of Trent'. He contrasts 'the austere decorated books printed by Christopher Plantin [...] to the sensuality displayed in the illuminations and woodcuts of earlier manuscripts and printed editions'. Paul Saenger, 'Books of Hours and the Reading Habits of the Later Middle Ages', in *The Culture of Print: Power and the Uses of Print in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Roger Chartier, trans. by Lydia G. Cochrane (Cambridge: Polity, 1989), pp. 141-73 (pp. 156 and 173, n. 122). Wieck describes a particularly eccentric late thirteenth-century English manuscript Hours: the scribe portrays the crucified Christ with a chicken's head, a figure 'committing the sin of Onan', St Stephen with a cruciform halo (reserved for Christ alone) and chess players dressed in underwear. Wieck, *Time Sanctified*, p. 101.

⁸⁷ I have as yet seen only limited examples of inflated indulgences in the early Parisian Hours. Such indulgences can be found, although Hours are by no means laden with them; they might introduce, for example, the texts of the Elevation Prayer and the prayer found in St John Lateran. We find before the former in a 1510 Hours: 'Pape boniface a donne a tous ceulx qui diront devotement ceste oraison qui s'ensuit: entre la levation du corpus domini et le dernier agnus dei, deux mille ans de vray pardon.' ([Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: Gillet Hardouyn, [1510]), (JR 17331), fol. 13'). For further examples, see, for instance, Reinburg, 'Popular Prayers', pp. 392-96, 405-06.

They address supernatural persons, promise certain benefits and indulgences, and are accompanied by images and figures.’⁸⁸

ii) French editions

If we now turn to early-printed French Hours, by which I understand those supplying at least a French translation of the Hours of the Virgin, we see that in the early decades of printing few editions were printed in the vernacular. In the early to mid-1490s, Vérard published what appears to have been the first printed French edition; it was a verse translation.⁸⁹ Mary Beth Winn’s work indicates that overall Vérard produced roughly eighty editions of the Book of Hours; of these the traces remain of only a very small number of editions in the vernacular.⁹⁰ According to Winn, Vérard usually printed one or two copies on vellum. Indeed, the copy of his French Hours held in the Bodleian is on vellum, richly illuminated, and clearly a lavish affair.⁹¹ The general layout is in line with translations of secular texts at this time: gothic black characters are used, guidelines have been ruled on to the pages in imitation of manuscripts, and although the Latin version has been given in the outer margins, it takes roughly a third of the size of the French on the page, giving prominence to the vernacular.

⁸⁸ Reinburg, ‘Popular Prayers’, pp. 286-87; I am most grateful to Virginia Reinburg for giving me her permission to quote from her doctoral dissertation. Reinburg provides an analysis of the Charlemagne prayers, ‘discovered’ prayers and prayers derived from Scripture, liturgy and Crusaders’ slogans, in her chapter entitled ‘The Devotional Underground: “Apocrypha”, “Superstition” and the Reformation’ (‘Popular Prayers’, pp. 284-338). For a discussion of the superstitious in English primers, see Duffy, Chapter 8, ‘Charms, Pardons and Promises: Lay Piety and “Superstition” in the Primers’, pp. 266-98.

⁸⁹ See Lacombe 18, 30-32bis; this translation was reprinted by Vostre in around 1510 (Lacombe 217-18). See Winn, pp. 153-60, 497; Reinburg, ‘Books of Hours’, p. 78.

⁹⁰ Winn, pp. 157, 221, 495-500. No definitive list of Vérard’s vernacular editions has yet been established and as with all Hours, it is often impossible to tell from catalogues which editions are in Latin and which in French. If catalogues do indicate ‘French’ or ‘Latin and French’, it does not imply that the Hours of the Virgin are in the vernacular; rather, it indicates in most cases that the title is in French, or that there are headings and perhaps additional prayers in French.

⁹¹ *Heures de Nostre Dame en francoys et en latin. Imprimees a Paris nouvellement* (Paris: Vérard, [1497?]), (Bod Douce BB 130). Not all of the typical Hours material is present; for example, the Penitential Psalms and Office of the Dead are missing. Some of this is located in Vérard’s *Vigilles des morts translatees de latin en francoys*.

The Hours are set out attractively with presentation as the foremost consideration. although division of the text, as with all Latin Hours of the period, is far from obvious (for example, psalms are not numbered and are often hard to distinguish). Like his first French Bible (the *Bible historique*), Vérard's French Book of Hours was an expensive edition which only richer members of the laity could have purchased.⁹² Vérard does not provide a prologue, but had he done so, it would have been against the usual form of the Book of Hours.⁹³ The translation of the Book of Hours did not require any further comment during this period; vernacular religious works and Scriptural translations had not run into difficulties at this point, and the pre-eminence of the French verse was not a provocative manoeuvre. In any case, this was not an edition which could be afforded by the masses.

The first prose translation published by Jean de Brie did not go through the press until around 1520.⁹⁴ Unfortunately, De Brie died not long after, so we cannot know whether any further plans existed.⁹⁵ It is in no way as luxurious as the previous edition and would have been more widely affordable; this project was part of the movement previously described to provide the laity with vernacular religious works.⁹⁶ The presentation of De Brie's edition is much what we would expect at this time, although it is less elaborate and more sober than Latin Hours:

⁹² C13, BH[c.1495-96]ver. See also my Chapter 3.

⁹³ For Vérard's rarely-used prologue to Hours (chiefly concerning the pictures used) and a discussion of this, see Winn, pp. 219-36.

⁹⁴ *Les Heures Nostre Dame a l'usage de Romme nouvellement translatez de latin en françois* (Paris: De Brie, [1520?]), (BL C.30.e.39); see Britnell, *Jean Bouchet*, pp. 193-94, 196, 212. There was a vernacular translation of a text related to the Book of Hours already in circulation at this time, the *Psautier Nostre Dame selon Sainct Jerosme*. This appeared in prose and verse and had been attributed to St Bonaventure in the fifteenth century. Various authorship has been suggested. See Lacombe, pp. LXIX-LXXII and, for example, Lacombe 109bis-quater (Vérard, c.1501), 186 (Barbier, 1509), and 483 (Chappellet, 1586); see also P50 (Trepperel et Jehannot, [1511?]) in Higman, *Piety and the People*.

⁹⁵ He did however publish a Latin Hours for the Use of Meaux in around 1521 (see BL C.46.d.19(1); also Lacombe 320).

⁹⁶ At around the same time, for instance, Jean Bouchet composed *Les Cantiques et Oraisons contemplatives de l'âme pénitente traversant les voies périlleuses*; although this work was not published, some of its contents were printed in a Book of Hours (Lacombe 520). See Jennifer Britnell, 'Jean Bouchet's Prayers in French for the Laity, *Les Cantiques et Oraisons contemplatives de l'âme pénitente traversant les voies périlleuses*', *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, 38 (1976), 421-36.

De Brie's Hours are in gothic characters, with the traditional black and red ink, simple woodcuts and calendar quatrains; the text within the Hours of the Virgin runs together and is not easily distinguishable. The venture constitutes a break from those in Latin in that the full Latin version is absent and that the owner can now read and understand his or her prayers.

c) The impact of the Reform movement on the French Book of Hours

This traditional, well-loved text was implicated in several of the debates sparked by Reform movements from the early sixteenth century onwards. Before we can progress to the last French translation printed in the early decades of the sixteenth century which became caught in the crossfire, let us review the reasons why the Book of Hours became a controversial work for both the Protestant and Catholic Churches.

First of all, it should be remembered that there was some considerable debate over the form of prayers. Protestants believed that the laity should understand their prayers and so were predisposed to dismiss the Book of Hours which was traditionally in Latin; in addition to this, they criticised prayers to the saints and anything within the Catholic Church that took on the aspect of 'superstitious' practice. It is unsurprising therefore that Reformers such as Guillaume Farel and Pierre Viret should censure either Hours or practices engendered by their use.⁹⁷ Their criticism echoed that of Luther, who in 1522 called for the reformation of the work at the very least:

Among the many harmful books and doctrines which are misleading and deceiving Christians and give rise to countless false beliefs, I regard the personal prayer books as by no means the least objectionable. They drub into the minds of simple people [...] such un-Christian tomfoolery about prayers to God and his saints! Moreover, these books are puffed

⁹⁷ See Reinburg, 'Hearing Lay People's Prayer', p. 19.

up with promises of indulgences and come out with decorations in red ink and pretty titles. [...] These books need a basic and thorough reformation if not total extermination.⁹⁸

At the same time, the Book of Hours came under fire from those not seeking schism; Erasmus had run into problems with the Faculty of Theology in the mid-1520s with the proposition that the laity should be able to understand their prayers.⁹⁹ Indeed, Erasmus was uncomfortable with too many prayers being offered to the Virgin instead of Christ; he recommended instead a thorough grounding in the Articles of Faith and God's Commandments, adding that further reinforcement should be provided by the clergy and through the use of books in the vernacular ('ces choses debvroient estre ung chascun an par les curez et pasteurs clerement et en brief declairees au peuple, et par beaulx petitz livretz en langue vulgaire imprimees en leurs cueurs').¹⁰⁰

Objections to vernacular versions of the Book of Hours came from Catholic theologians; as we have seen in Chapter 3, translations of Scripture had been banned by the Faculty of Theology from the mid-1520s. Not only were entire Bible translations censored following the publication of Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples' translation in the 1520s, so too were works containing parts of

⁹⁸ Martin Luther, *Personal Prayer Book* [*Betbüchlein*] (1522), trans. by Martin H. Bertram, in *Luther's Works*, ed. by Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehmann, 55 vols (St. Louis (Concordia Publishing House) and Philadelphia (Fortress Press), 1955-86), XLIII (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1968), 3-45 (pp. 11-12); see also Reinburg, 'Hearing Lay People's Prayer', p. 19. As Reinburg points out, despite this assault on the Book of Hours, analysis of an alternative with evangelical roots, *Le Livre de vraye et parfaite oraison*, which was printed in at least fourteen editions spanning the period 1528-1545, shows that it borrows substantially from the Catholic Hours in terms of structure, contents and appearance (Reinburg, 'Books of Hours', pp. 80-81; L97-112 in Higman, *Piety and the People*); see also Higman, 'Luther et la piété de l'Église gallicane: *Le Livre de vraye et parfaite oraison*', in *Lire et découvrir*, pp. 179-200. This text included work by Farel and Luther ('tidied up to avoid too forceful a Reformation message') and represented 'an attempt [...] to find the common ground of religious attitudes and practice among the competing confessions' (Higman, *Piety and the People*, p. 15).

⁹⁹ *Collectio Judiciorum de novis erroribus*, ed. by Duplessis d'Argentré, II, 45, col. 1 and 61, col. 2; see Britnell, *Jean Bouchet*, p. 194.

¹⁰⁰ Desiderius Erasmus, *Maniere de se confesser*, trans. by Claude Chansonnette (Basle: [Cratander], 1524), in Eugénie Droz, *Chemins de l'hérésie: Textes et documents*, 4 vols (Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1970-76), I (1970), 10-41 (pp. 30-32). This is a translation of Erasmus' *Exomologesis sive modus confitendi*. See also Richard L. DeMolen, *The Spirituality of Erasmus of Rotterdam* (Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1987), pp. 62-63.

Scripture in translation, such as the Book of Hours which contained parts of the Psalter and Gospel passages; French Hours were thus suspect.

As a result, when the poet Pierre Gringore's verse translation of the Book of Hours appeared, it was condemned by the Faculty of Theology on 26 August 1525; this decision was confirmed by the *Parlement* two days later.¹⁰¹ It was, in fact, the first published decision condemning Scriptural translation; before this, the authorities had not wanted to go against the wishes of François Ier.¹⁰² However, Gringore, who was far from unorthodox, succeeded in overturning the decision within weeks. A royal privilege was granted and the book reprinted eight times up to 1544.¹⁰³ In appearance, Gringore's edition was traditional. The book is, of course, in gothic characters, with fine woodcuts, which include that of the astrological man. The Latin text is on the outer margins, almost three times smaller than the French text; although this textual arrangement is standard for the time, it is interesting to note that the Latin remains. As with its predecessors, headings carry little information within the Hours of the Virgin, making it difficult to distinguish different parts of the text such as psalms. Gringore's verse translation has been formulated carefully¹⁰⁴ and there is significantly less material in his Hours than usual, in terms of the contents of each of the Hours of the Virgin (and so consequently less of the Psalter is translated) and of the texts we expect to find in a Book of Hours (the Sequences of the Gospels are missing, for example); it is not a complete Book of Hours. These Scriptural omissions were no doubt due to the fact that the work was translated into verse rather than prose. Gringore writes an extended introductory verse addressed to Renée de Bourbon, in which he cautiously claims to have taken advice from 'doctes clers, prudentz

¹⁰¹ *Heures de Nostre Dame translatees en francoys et mises en rihtme [sic] par Pierre Gregoire [...] Avec le privilege du roy [...]* (Paris: Petit, [1525?]), (BL C.24.a.26; Bod Douce M 655(2)). See Higman, *Censorship and the Sorbonne*, pp. 77-79.

¹⁰² Higman, *Censorship and the Sorbonne*, pp. 77-78 (including p. 77, n. 17).

¹⁰³ On this episode, see Britnell, *Jean Bouchet*, pp. 195-96 and Reinburg, 'Books of Hours', pp. 78-79.

¹⁰⁴ Gringore's psalm translations are examined in Michel Jeanneret, *Poésie et tradition biblique au XVIe siècle: Recherches stylistiques sur les paraphrases des psaumes de Marot à Malherbe* (Paris: Librairie José Corti, 1969), pp. 35-42.

lectrez et saiges' on the spiritual meaning of the text;¹⁰⁵ he also underlines the intended audience:

[...] je lay faict, pour donner exemplaire
Et proffiter, au simple populaire
Et gens non clerics [...]¹⁰⁶

His intention to profit the masses fits pre-Reform currents to instruct the laity through the provision of vernacular religious works. So far, the most notable feature of the three French Hours we have examined is the simple fact that they are in the vernacular.

No new translations followed Gringore's until around 1545, undoubtedly due to the Faculty of Theology's ban on all Scriptural translations.¹⁰⁷ In fact, there was an overall decrease in the number of all types of Hours published in the course of the sixteenth century, as figures compiled by Reinburg from Hanns Bohatta's bibliography illustrate:¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Gringore-Petit [1525?], fol. [2]^r.

¹⁰⁶ Gringore-Petit [1525?], fol. [2]^v.

¹⁰⁷ Reinburg signals a 1543 French paraphrase by Gilles Cailleau, no doubt with a reformist agenda (*Heures de Nostre Dame selon l'usage de Rome traduites de latin en françois par frere Gilles Cailleau* (Poitiers: J. et E. de Marnef, 1543), Reinburg, 'Books of Hours', p. 79. See also Higman, 'A Heretic's Library: The Drilhon Inventory, 1545', in *Lire et découvrir*, pp. 65-85 (pp. 66, 68, 73). Higman records a further edition in the period to 1551: see C4-5 (1543; 1547) in Higman, *Piety and the People*.

¹⁰⁸ For the statistics on book ownership of Hours, see Reinburg, 'Books of Hours', p. 72; on the importance within the book industry, see Roger Chartier, 'Culture as Appropriation: Popular Cultural Uses in Early Modern France', in *Understanding Popular Culture: Europe from the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century*, ed. by Stephen L. Kaplan (New York: Mouton, 1984), pp. 229-53 (p. 240) and Annie Parent, *Les Métiers du livre à Paris au XVI^e siècle (1535-60)* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1974). Albert Labarre's *Le Livre dans la vie amiénoise au XVI^e siècle: L'Enseignement des inventaires après décès (1503-1576)* (Paris: Nauwelaerts, 1971) is a common source for figures.

Table 4.1 *The decline in the number of editions of Books of Hours published in Paris in the course of the sixteenth century*¹⁰⁹

Decade	Number of different editions of Books of Hours printed in Paris ¹¹⁰
1500s	334
1510s	239
1520s	130
1530s	70
1540s	44
1550s	28
1560s	18
1570s	13
1580s	28
1590s	7

Saturation in a market where Hours were handed down through families was no doubt partly a cause of this,¹¹¹ although the downturn also implies an evolution in devotional trends, in some respects along the lines suggested by Higman, although we have seen that these trends began before the period he indicated. The requirements of the laity had evolved whilst generally speaking the Book of Hours had not: Hours modelled along the lines of the earlier editions and printed in gothic type persisted until the end of the century. As Labarre notes:

Après 1540, les Heures semblent conserver la composition qu’elles avaient au début du siècle. [...] [Elles ont] à peu près le même contenu que des Heures de Vérard, de Vostre ou des Hardouyn. D’autres Heures imprimées aussi à Paris [...] manifestent même un curieux signe d’archaïsme en utilisant des caractères gothiques, alors que ces caractères n’étaient plus guère employés en France depuis les années 1530-40.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ Reinburg compiles these figures from Bohatta’s work, although she finds the totals too high because Bohatta sometimes lists the same edition more than once. However, the figures convey the drop in numbers of Hours adequately. Reinburg, ‘Books of Hours’, pp. 73-74.

¹¹⁰ Reinburg concentrates on Parisian publishers; according to Bohatta’s bibliography, they printed over 1300 of the more than 1500 Hours produced in France between the 1480s and 1599. Reinburg, ‘Books of Hours’, p. 73.

¹¹¹ See Reinburg, ‘Books of Hours’, pp. 76-77.

¹¹² *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, VII, col. 423. He further comments that ‘plus rarement des signes de renouveau se manifestent; si le gothique subsiste longtemps encore, le caractère romain apparaît tôt’, col. 424. Tory’s 1525 Hours is cited as the most famous example of an early Hours with roman type. Lacombe finds the use of gothic characters in Latin Hours up to 1598: see Lacombe 495; also Lacombe, p. LXXX, n. 1.

Indeed, the later Hours look very similar to those of a much earlier era. Although Labarre notes modifications in the appearance of later Hours,¹¹³ in my experience, they do not differ greatly from their predecessors. Labarre rightly observes that editions are in general illustrated less and that the borders disappear, but overstates the extent to which this is true. The light paring down of the decorative element perhaps partly accounts for the reduced number of Books of Hours from this era extant today; it seems likely that people were more inclined to preserve the earlier, more lavish editions.

II) The French Book of Hours in the latter half of the sixteenth century: peritext and text

Despite the problems encountered by both Latin and vernacular Books of Hours, the legacy of the vernacular Hours did not end in France with the Reformation; a few French prose editions started to appear from around 1545. Several apparently independent bilingual Latin-French and French editions were produced in relatively small quantities in the late 1540s and then in the 1550s.¹¹⁴ Christopher Plantin's work in this area was more extensive than that of previous publishers, although probably came to an end in 1570.¹¹⁵ Most importantly, however, Benoist published French and Latin-French versions in 1569. Thereafter, Hours carrying his name dominated the market for several decades.¹¹⁶

¹¹³ *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, VII, cols 423-24.

¹¹⁴ See Appendix 1, Part A.

¹¹⁵ Plantin printed up to eight editions in the period 1557-1570; after this he concentrated instead on publishing the Latin *Officia* sanctioned by Rome. He possibly published an *Officium* in Latin and French in 1575; this would be a most unusual move, as we shall see later. See Appendix 1, Part B; see also Karen Lee Bowen, *Christopher Plantin's Books of Hours: Illustration and Production* (Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1997), pp. 221-58, 273-76 and Léon Voet with Jenny Voet-Grisolle, *The Plantin Press (1555-1589): A Bibliography of the Works Printed and Published by Christopher Plantin at Antwerp and Leiden*, 6 vols (Amsterdam: Van Hoeve, 1980-1983), III (1981), 1144-63, and IV (1982), 1643-60.

¹¹⁶ I have so far located approximately forty different editions, the last published in 1646, thirty-eight years after Benoist's death (see Appendix 1, Part C). Only a small number of Hours not attributed to Benoist have as yet been found that were printed after 1569 (see Appendix 1, Part D).

We now turn to an examination of the peritext and text of the earliest of what I term ‘later’ French Hours; our interest will primarily focus on Hours from the 1550s up to 1570 for comparison with Benoist’s work.¹¹⁷ Firstly, we consider the appearance and general layout of the Hours in this group to gauge the kinds of influences and impulses which lie behind their production. With a similar aim, we compare the translations of Scriptural passages within the works. We then focus directly on Benoist’s Hours by looking more closely at certain of the contents within his two 1569 Hours, which reveals how the publications were assembled, before turning to a more comprehensive discussion of the important points which come from the *advertissements* added by the theologian to his first Books of Hours, in which we see the motivations that drove Benoist to provide a French Book of Hours.

a) Appearance

In presentational terms, the later French Books of Hours under consideration form a sharp contrast to many of the Latin Hours in circulation at the same time, which, as we have already noted, retain gothic characters and in which the texts of the Hours of the Virgin tend to lack visible forms of division;¹¹⁸ the woodcuts in the Latin Hours are also very similar to those used earlier in the century. The later vernacular Hours use roman characters and in general are distinctive in their lack of ornamentation and images, although some images – predominantly

¹¹⁷ My observations for later Hours printed up to 1570 are based on personal consultation of Boursette 1554, Merlin 1555, Bonhomme 1558, Plantin 1565, Benoist-Kerver 1569(1) (Benoist’s Latin-French Hours), Benoist-Kerver 1569(2) (Benoist’s French Hours) and Karen Bowen’s photographic reproductions of Plantin 1557 (figs 18-23), Du Chemin 1570 (figs 24-25) and Plantin 1570 (figs 51-57) in her work on Plantin (the figures are unpaginated and positioned at the back of her book).

¹¹⁸ For example, psalm numbers are still missing, as are other means to aid navigating a text easily such as page headings.

religious – remain.¹¹⁹ The sources of biblical passages are often indicated, psalms are numbered,¹²⁰ and the text is clearly set out with numerous headings.¹²¹ There are usually few or no quatrains and the promises of indulgences are gone. Benoist's two 1569 versions of the Book of Hours fit these trends. They are not intended to appeal to 'the visual, aural and tactile dimensions of devotional practice' – aspects that Reinburg observed of earlier Books of Hours – but are intended to be read and understood. These works do not simply appeal to the heart; they engage the laity's intellectual processes. Quite clearly, they continue the work of De Brie and pre-Reform movements to provide vernacular religious works for the masses.

b) Contents

i) Scriptural translations

A comparison of the Scriptural translations in Benoist's 1569 Hours and their immediate predecessors reveals the large extent to which later editions borrowed from earlier editions and even, in certain respects, from De Brie's much earlier prose translation. If we rely on the evidence provided by comparing the translation of one psalm (Psalm 6, the first Penitential Psalm), the Hours appear to provide almost identical translations;¹²² the publishers or editors simply re-use the translation of the earliest Hours consulted, Boursette's 1554 edition.¹²³ In turn, Boursette's translation appears to derive from Calvin's 1546 Genevan

¹¹⁹ For instance, the astrological man has disappeared and only three of the nine Hours retain borders: Bonhomme 1558, Plantin 1565 and Du Chemin 1570. The borders are not like those of traditional Hours, but more Renaissance in style (see the borders of Du Chemin 1570, in Bowen, figs 24-25).

¹²⁰ Individual verses are never numbered.

¹²¹ See, for example, the presentation of the text of Plantin 1557, in Bowen, figs 19-23.

¹²² See Appendix 2, Parts B, C and D.

¹²³ The translation published by Madeleine Boursette, the widow of François Regnault, could of course be based on an earlier Hours to which I have not had access. In addition, her 1550 edition (see Appendix 1, Part A) presumably contains the same translation, too.

Bible.¹²⁴ Using the translation of the Psalter from a printed Bible was not a new exercise; De Brie had used the *Bible historiale* much earlier in the century.¹²⁵ As one might expect, Christopher Plantin, who had been so interested in republishing Benoist's Bible, changed his translation accordingly; in his 1570 edition, he adopts the Psalter translation from Benoist's recently published Bible.¹²⁶ On the other hand, Benoist, who according to the title of his edition claims to have re-edited the Hours himself, has not made extensive changes to the translation of the Books of Hours prior to his. It is interesting that he does not use his own Bible translation, but returns to Boursette's 1554 version derived from the 1546 Genevan Bible. In fact, this same translation can be found in French Hours up to around 1611 bearing his name.¹²⁷

On the other hand, examination of the introductory psalm to the Hours of the Virgin (Psalm 94) shows that the person who compiled the earliest of the later Hours turned to a different source for their Scriptural translation;¹²⁸ Boursette's 1554 Hours appears to use De Brie's translation, with only minimal textual changes.¹²⁹ Books of Hours to 1569 then recycle this translation, including

¹²⁴ See Appendix 2, Part G. All important Catholic and Protestant revisions of the Bible were consulted for comparison of the translation of Psalm 6 and then of Psalm 94 and John 1 (see main text below): editions included C5 (BExp[c.1477,hus](2)), C7 (N[c.1479]buy), C8 (BA[c.1479-80,roy]), C17 (BH[c.1510]ver), C18 (BA[c.1510]noi), C51 (B1530lem), C66 (B1535win), C82 (B1540[gir]), C85 (B1541hay), C128 (B1546gir), C145 (B1550gra-ber-wae), C202 (B1555chat), C261 (B1560est), C366 (B1566hon), C373 (B1566che), C399 (B1568nyv), C439 (B1578pla), and C515 (B1588geneve(fol)). The latter two were consulted for subsequent Hours.

¹²⁵ See Appendix 2, Part A.

¹²⁶ See Appendix 2, Parts C and G. I cannot compare Du Chemin 1570; Bowen does not provide a photograph of the relevant page.

¹²⁷ I have consulted Benoist-Buon 1580, Mettayer-Houzé-Drobet 1595, Houzé 1610, Benoist-Cousturier [1611] and Benoist-Le Clerc 1615. All Hours up to and including the posthumous [1611] Benoist Hours appear to use this translation, including those not attributed to him, although the 1615 Benoist edition uses a different translation. See Appendix 2, Parts E and F.

¹²⁸ I sampled the first six verses of Psalm 94 in all versions previously indicated as having been consulted apart from Plantin 1557 and Plantin 1570 (and Du Chemin 1570, which I was unable to consult for Psalm 6). The same set of Hours (with the exceptions above) was compared for the third and final comparison, the translation of a passage from John.

¹²⁹ I have not yet located the source used for De Brie's translation of Psalm 94 and of what I believe is representative of the translation of only a very small section of the Psalter within these Hours; further study would ascertain whether this or Psalm 6 is more representative. As the Psalter circulated in French elsewhere than in vernacular Bibles, I suspect that the source is not a French Bible (see, for example, *Les Bibles en français*, ed. by Bogaert, p. 40). It seems to me that the translation more closely resembles that of Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples' French Bible of 1530

Benoist's 1569 Hours. Subsequent to this, nearly all versions including Benoist's 1611 Hours use this translation.¹³⁰ Finally, if we consider the Gospel passage from John which is usually placed before the Hours of the Virgin, we see that the compiler of De Brie's Hours consulted the *Bible historique* again.¹³¹ However, this time, the earliest of the later French Hours appears to be influenced by evangelical Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples' 1530 Bible and by the first French Protestant Bible translated by Pierre Robert Olivétan published in 1535. As before, the successors up to and including the 1611 Benoist Hours copy the translation almost without exception.¹³²

In conclusion, the results of a comparison of the Scriptural translations of the later French Hours suggest that the compiler of the earliest edition (Boursette's 1554 Hours or a possible predecessor) used more than one source; the source changes according to the part of the text in question. De Brie's translation is 'recycled' for Psalm 94 (this is a noticeably more modern translation than his other Scriptural translations); in the Gospel translation sampled, the heavy influence of Lefèvre's Bible of 1530 combined with that of the 1535 Protestant Bible can be seen; finally, the 1546 Genevan Bible is used for what I suspect to be the majority of the psalm translations. Subsequent Hours then borrow wholesale the translation of Boursette's text. This includes Benoist's 1569 Hours, which in turn influenced most of the Hours which followed. At no point does Benoist turn to his own French Bible. It could be argued that the Bibles used

rather than that of the *Bible historique*, which is obviously problematic; the former postdates De Brie's Hours. This perhaps indicates nothing more than that the compiler of the De Brie Hours and Lefèvre worked from a common source for their translations of Psalm 94.

¹³⁰ The exception is *Mettayer-Houzé-Drobet 1595*. The later *Benoist-Le Clerc 1615* is also different; the translation of the Psalter is obviously in no way related to its predecessors (see Appendix 2, Part E).

¹³¹ I compared the first six verses of John; Britnell finds that the version of Luke as well as of John is influenced by the translation of the *Bible historique*. Britnell, *Jean Bouchet*, pp. 193-94 and 215, n. 28.

¹³² There is one exception only: *Benoist-Kerver 1569(1)* (see Appendix 3); a close study of its first six verses indicates the influence of both Protestant and Catholic Bibles as well as Books of Hours printed prior to its publication. The most significant modification is perhaps the use of the word 'verbe' instead of 'parole': Bibles containing 'verbe' include the 1550 Louvain Bible, Benoist's Bible, and Plantin's 1578 Bible; that is to say the Catholic editions. On the reasons behind the use

indicate that the earliest of the later French Hours was influenced by a reforming hand;¹³³ more likely, this was a pragmatic move to use the most current translations of the time.¹³⁴ Producers of Hours which followed were then equally content to use the work of others and copy translations.¹³⁵ The editorial methods of Benoist for his Hours thus repeat what others have done and recall the ‘translation’ techniques of his Bible. As we have seen before, Benoist’s aim was to facilitate the rapid dissemination of ‘useful’ texts; he went about effecting his plans in the most expedient way available. The differing translations of the passage from John’s Gospel within his two 1569 Hours¹³⁶ reflect the rapidity with which he acted and a lack of thoroughness; he perhaps handed the rough material to either his publisher, Jacques Kerver, or his printer, Jean le Blanc, who repeated the ‘translation’ methods of their predecessors and used an earlier edition as a printing model. It seems unlikely that his publisher, Jacques Kerver, who produced a traditional Latin Hours in 1569, was ‘suspect’ or deliberately used a translation that was in any way suspect.¹³⁷

of ‘verbe’ within the Catholic Church, see Bogaert, pp. 49-50. The significance of the use of this word and of the difference this points to in Benoist’s two 1569 editions will be discussed later.

¹³³ On the one hand, the use of the Protestant terms ‘Eternel’ (missing from the 1546 Bible and probable source of translation, but used in Olivétan’s 1535 Bible irregularly and then in the authoritative 1588 Genevan Bible (see *Le Temps des Réformes et la Bible*, ed. by Bedouelle and Roussel, p. 453)) and ‘parole’ in *Boursette 1554* would support this idea. In addition to this, Labarre, noting the earlier bilingual Latin-French edition of 1549 printed in Lyons by Guillaume Roville, suggests that Roville was possibly ‘teinté de protestantisme’; he remarks on the fact that the French text dominates the page and that the Gospel Sequences and non-liturgical prayers are in French alone (*Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, VII, col. 424). This arrangement is not unusual for the Hours that we have been considering and some are entirely in French. Of course, it should be remembered that the arrangement described by Labarre does not differ from that of the earliest vernacular Hours and so Protestantism is not necessarily implied (if Labarre is indeed making this connection; his writing is a little ambiguous at this point); the compiler may merely be eager to ensure that the owner can read the text in the vernacular, something which Benoist too obviously desired.

¹³⁴ Of course, when Boursette prepared a Book of Hours for publication in 1550, De Leuze’s French Bible may not have been available, even if she had wanted to use this translation. For those who published Hours prior to 1550, the use of this Catholic translation would certainly not have been an option.

¹³⁵ As these practices were widespread, it seems fairly likely that one of the pre-1550 editions would have been the source of Boursette’s translations.

¹³⁶ See Appendix 3 and note 132 above.

¹³⁷ Kerver produced a Latin Book of Hours along the lines of the early Latin Hours in 1569 ([Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: Kerver, 1569), (Harris Manchester X1569/5)): this has gothic characters and amongst the many woodcuts includes a picture of the astrological man; it also has French rhymes throughout the calendar and Hours and its text is not clearly divided. Psalms are not numbered, unlike contemporary French Hours.

ii) Identifying possible printing models for Benoist's 1569 Hours

There is in fact further evidence which confirms that Benoist, his publisher or his printer used certain Books of Hours published prior to his as printing models; let us now focus our attention on the small details of certain of the contents of Benoist's two 1569 Hours which indicate the most likely candidates. We have already noted that his Hours fit the trends of other 'later' Hours; in both 1569 editions, the theologian suppressed the traditional quatrains from the calendar and the pictures used are small, simple woodcuts which are kept to a minimum;¹³⁸ comparison of the Scriptural translations showed that Benoist used previous Hours. There are, however, slight differences between the two texts¹³⁹ which possibly indicate that at least two models were used in 1569; the following discussion attempts to identify which editions these were.

There is a case for Boursette's 1554 Hours (or its model, if one existed) being one of the editions to which the compiler of Benoist's 1569 Hours looked; the

¹³⁸ In the calendars, there are woodcuts depicting traditional peasant scenes; other woodcuts are of Bible scenes or retell the Nativity story. There are no borders, the astrological man has disappeared, as has the Tree of Jesse, perhaps because it leads to Joseph rather than Mary. To conclude, most of the superfluous decorative elements have been removed, whilst pictures such as those of the Annunciation remain to divide the Hours; these are not only necessary bookmarks, but also instructive.

¹³⁹ The Latin-French Hours in general has more material. For example, in addition to the standard material of the French-only Hours, the section of prayers following the Suffrages of the Saints is much lengthier than that of the French-only Hours. One of the main additions is the section headed 'Oraisons de la vie de Jesus Christ' ('Toutes les oraisons contenues en la vie de nostre Seigneur Jesus Christ, contenans en sommaire partie des mysteres et miracles faicts par iceluy. Devant chacune desquelles avons mis le sommaire pour avoir facile intelligence à quels propos elles ont esté faictes.'), fols 191^v-211^v; this forms a collection of over fifty French prayers addressed to either God or Christ. These are essentially instructive prayers which follow the Gospel. The versions of the texts in the Hours also differ in places. For instance, the Suffrages to the Saints end with St Margaret followed by St Barbara in the bilingual edition; it lacks therefore the St Genevieve text found in the French-only Hours and then later in Benoist's 1580 Hours. (Amongst the earlier of the later Hours, St Genevieve is also missing from Merlin 1555 and Bonhomme 1558.) Another example of a textual difference between the two 1569 Hours can be seen in the text of the Ten Commandments; they are set out briefly in the Latin-French version (fols 189^v-190^r), as in Benoist's 1580 Hours (fols b7^r-^v), rather than given the longer exposition found in the French-only Hours (fols 144^v-152^v).

calendar of this Parisian edition is reproduced exactly in Benoist's two 1569 Hours.¹⁴⁰ It introduces the first psalm of the Hours of the Virgin, Psalm 94, as Psalm 90; this error is again reproduced in Benoist's 1569 Hours.¹⁴¹ Although the additional material to vernacular Hours is to a large extent shared, Boursette's 1554 Hours and Benoist's French-only Hours have the texts in a strikingly similar order and contain a text which those not attributed to Benoist lack, concerning 'l'institution du s. Sacrement de nostre Seigneur Jesus-Christ'; this is also reproduced in Benoist's 1569 bilingual edition and his 1580 Hours.¹⁴²

One area of difference between Benoist's 1569 Hours is that the French edition has no quatrains or rhymes at all whilst the bilingual copy has a few short rhymes, although accompanying only the Gospel passages. For these quatrains, the compiler has looked to a second edition, perhaps another French Hours published in Paris, such as Merlin's 1555 edition; although this carries a different calendar, it contains quatrains, some of which go before each of the Gospel Sequences. Thus, before the excerpt from John, we find:

Sainct Jehan puisa en la fontaine
 Tesmoing est son escripture:
 La fontaine est Jesus Christ:
 Dont il sortit eaue vive et certaine.¹⁴³

A similar rhyme is provided in Benoist's bilingual Hours in the same position.¹⁴⁴ Thus, for Benoist's Latin-French Hours, the compiler perhaps looked to Merlin's 1555 Hours; indeed, Benoist's bilingual Hours and Merlin's physically resemble

¹⁴⁰ This calendar is also reproduced in Bonhomme 1558, Plantin 1565 (with a few gaps) and later in Benoist-Buon 1580.

¹⁴¹ The slip is copied also in Merlin 1555, Bonhomme 1558 and later in Benoist-Buon 1580.

¹⁴² See, for instance, Boursette 1554, fols R3^v-R4^v and Benoist-Kerver 1569(2), fols 140^r-141^v.

¹⁴³ Merlin 1555, fol. 5^r. These rhymes are not of a high quality and, as can be seen here, do not always scan.

¹⁴⁴ In Benoist's 1569 Latin-French Hours on fol. 1^v we find:

Sainct Jean puisa en la fontaine
 Tesmoing en est le sien escrit,
 La fontaine c'est Jesus Christ.
 Dont sortit Eau vive, et certaine.

The rhyme placed in front of the Passion extract in both Hours is also identical; compare Merlin 1555, fol. 12^r with Benoist-Kerver 1569(1), fol. 8^v.

each other in that they are both smaller-paged publications than Benoist's French-only Hours.¹⁴⁵ It is of course possible that all of the elements above were found in one or more editions that no longer survive or have not been consulted; the important point is that Benoist or his publisher or printer used other editions as printing models.

On the one hand, it would be wrong to overstate the differences between the two 1569 Hours; both convey the same overall intent, as the appearance indicates: few images (in fact, the same simple woodcuts of country life are used for the calendars) and a clearly laid out text in roman characters, with the sources of biblical excerpts given and psalms numbered. Benoist was providing an updated instructional and devotional work which the laity could understand. Some more established elements do remain, such as the picture of Bathsheba and the use of woodcuts to divide the canonical hours; it should be remembered that Benoist was attempting to provide a modernised work, not create a new form, and several familiar features therefore remain. These perhaps also reassured the masses who were accustomed to certain elements; on a more practical level, these were possibly there because of the limitations of the printer's resources.

On the other hand, it should not be overlooked that the works are slightly different, which is surprising if one considers the fact that they shared the same publisher and printer. Both the contents and the versions of the text differ in places. From the beginning of Benoist's involvement with vernacular Hours in 1569, he had no single, authoritative text. If we reflect upon the nature of his 'editorial' and publishing activities as so far portrayed in this and previous chapters, it seems that Benoist was an enabler who oversaw the work of a number of publishers whom he trusted to produce the text in good order. He was more interested in producing the texts than looking closely at the contents and the minutiae of the operation. However, because the detail was unimportant to him, it

¹⁴⁵ See Appendix 4 for indications that compilers of Benoist's later editions may have looked at Merlin 1555.

does not mean that he was not committed to his publishing activities; we have seen abundant evidence of his commitment in this and previous chapters.¹⁴⁶

c) The legacy: influences on the French Book of Hours of the late 1500s and early 1600s

It is beyond the scope of this study to examine in detail the vernacular Hours subsequent to Benoist's 1569 Hours; however, it should be noted that the Hours in the final quarter of the sixteenth century appear to follow the pattern and general layout set out by Hours such as Benoist's 1569 editions, whilst showing some influence from contemporary developments – the use of copperplates from around the end of the sixteenth century, for instance. Comparison of the contents of Hours from the last quarter of the sixteenth century and first quarter of the seventeenth century shows that they have borrowed from previous work to some extent, although the material has been reordered and modified by different editors.¹⁴⁷

The latest Benoist edition that I have consulted published during Benoist's life is closely related to his earlier work; his 1580 Hours carries the same translation, calendar and at least some woodcuts identical to those used in both 1569 Hours;¹⁴⁸ like the earlier editions, it has relatively few woodcuts and is in an easy-to-read, clear layout. Its principal difference lies in that some material has been

¹⁴⁶ This seems a more likely explanation of the events than that the publishers or printers involved in both his Bible and Hours deliberately altered the text and were using his name as a cover; as we have seen, the Bible and Hours were produced in the same manner as others of their type.

¹⁴⁷ Comparison of the Scriptural translations shows that compilers in general use the translations in Benoist's 1569 French Hours up to around 1611; however, the psalm numbering of Psalm 94 has been corrected in *Mettayer-Houzé-Drobet 1595* and *Houzé 1610*. It seems interesting that the posthumous Benoist Hours of around 1611 designates this 'Psalm 95'. We find Psalm 94 numbered Psalm 95 in Bibles such as *B1535win*, *B1546gir*, *B1566hon*, and *B1588geneve(fol)* – all Protestant Bibles. The last Hours to use the calendar in Benoist's 1569 Hours appears to be his 1580 edition; none of his Hours carry the calendar used in his edition of the saints' lives first published at the end of the 1570s.

¹⁴⁸ See the calendar pictures.

reordered, with the ‘Instruction pour le Chrestien’ following the calendar,¹⁴⁹ whilst various ‘devotes oraisons’ are left at the back; this is the way other vernacular Hours are organised after this point, perhaps influenced by the Latin *Officia* from 1571 onwards, which will be discussed later.¹⁵⁰

Despite the minor modifications made to the Hours’ form, it seems that in some quarters it was resistant to change from the form established by Hours in the third quarter of the sixteenth century: for example, the 1611 Benoist Hours has several features that recall the earlier Benoist editions, including the use of woodcuts instead of the copperplates that appear in other Hours of the time; guidelines are also still being drawn into Hours at this time.¹⁵¹ However, after Benoist’s death in 1608, it seems that at least some of the Hours attributed to the theologian probably gained attractive engravings; once Benoist died, he could not control their presentation and ensure that the main use of this devotional work was to engage the understanding of the laity.¹⁵²

Conclusion

Reinburg’s familiarity with Books of Hours in France prior to the Counter-Reformation period undoubtedly provides us with valuable insights into an under-researched field; however, when discussing the fate of the Book of Hours in the

¹⁴⁹ This contains the Paternoster, the Ten Commandments, and so on; Pasquier indicates that the ‘instruction chrestienne’ in Benoist’s 1579 Hours is by Pierre Viel (Pasquier, p. 360), who collaborated with Benoist on his hagiographical work. It is unclear whether this is so for Benoist-Buon 1580, although from Pasquier’s description, the 1579 and 1580 Hours appear to be very similar.

¹⁵⁰ The unique feature of this edition is the positioning of the Latin text; it is reduced to roughly half the size of the French translation (this is not unusual) and then placed on the inner margins rather than the usual outer margins. This is the form used in Benoist’s 1568 Bible; in Books of Hours, I have seen this replicated only in a late seventeenth-century Hours. This arrangement makes it particularly difficult to read the Latin version; perhaps Benoist or his publisher or printer intended this.

¹⁵¹ See, for example, Benoist-Le Clerc 1615.

¹⁵² Pasquier provides few details of Benoist’s Hours, but the bibliographical descriptions that are given indicate that the posthumous Meiat edition of 1623 is more lavishly decorated than those I have consulted; it seems likely that the Meiat edition is not a unique case. Pasquier, p. 361.

latter half of the sixteenth century, she appears to underestimate the quantity of editions of the Hours such as those discussed above. Noting the Latin Offices of the Virgin with which Jesuits were involved in the Counter-Reformation era (for example, the *Office de la Vierge Marie, pour tous les temps de l'année. Reveu et ordonné de nouveau suyvnt la réformation du Concile de Trente, avec plusieurs prières faictes par le R. P. Coton, de la Compagnie de Jesus* (Paris: Huré, 1621)), she claims that 'by the late sixteenth century, the Jesuits had managed to appropriate the Hours almost entirely for their educational purposes'.¹⁵³ Reinburg outlines the Tridentine doctrine and late Counter-Reformation attitudes in Coton's prayers and 'his preference for a single kind of clerically mediated lay experience' and argues that

by the late sixteenth century the Book of Hours had been deprived of its autonomy. It was censored by bishops; it was revised by Jesuits. Its great variety of prayers was drastically pruned. From a flexible compilation of prayer texts of multiple languages, forms, and aspirations, the Book of Hours had become a homogenized collection of unified dogma and style.¹⁵⁴

This was more in line with what the authorities in Rome desired, as we shall see later, but the work of those such as Benoist frustrated their aims and ensured that Rome and its closest supporters could not dictate the future of the Book of Hours in France in the Counter-Reformation period.

It is evident that the legacy of the French Book of Hours went far beyond the first half of the sixteenth century. Books of Hours were issued in the second half of the century which continued currents seen in the early 1500s that had proved difficult to sustain in the earlier period because of the Reformation. Benoist in particular seemed determined to provide vernacular instruction for the laity in the manner of those operating before the spread of Lutheranism, in this case by publishing a French Book of Hours; the popularity of such work shows a willing readership.

¹⁵³ Reinburg, 'Popular Prayers', pp. 370-71 (p. 370).

¹⁵⁴ Reinburg, 'Popular Prayers', p. 371.

The verse translations are very much products of their time, the pre-Reformation era; the prose vernacular Hours are equally so, whether they are from the pre- or Counter-Reformation periods. Later editions are clearly influenced by what has preceded, looking to earlier works for Scriptural translations. The French Bibles used as sources for Scriptural translation in the earliest of the later Hours (Boursette 1554) are possibly indicative of a progressive hand at work; however, as with all Scriptural translation and as witnessed in the editions which follow this vernacular Hours, we must remember that it is not unusual for ‘translators’ to use the best translations already in existence. The genuine innovation lies in the presentational aspects; the later Hours show a break from traditional Latin Hours which, in the 1550s and 1560s, had in general evolved very little. The devotional experience of the masses when using this text was thenceforth to be grounded in understanding, something which Benoist endorsed and ensured would continue; in all likelihood, the French Book of Hours would have evolved in this manner earlier in the century had it not been for the activities of the Reformers. Indeed, earlier in this chapter, we made a similar observation of Benoist’s editions of other texts popular in the pre-Reformation period; his work with the Book of Hours evidently follows along the lines of that on other texts.

III) Benoist’s peritextual additions: the 1569 *advertissements*

When in 1569 Benoist wrote several *advertissements* to accompany his Hours, it was an unusual move; Books of Hours seldom contain material addressed to the reader from the editor, translator or publisher. Furthermore, in these *advertissements*, part of the peritext to a traditional devotional work, the theologian engages in polemic and addresses several issues which had been debated heatedly following the activities of Reformers earlier in the century, including psalm translation and prayers in the vernacular. These questions are obviously associated with vernacular editions of the Book of Hours, as we have already seen; in this section, we look at the position Benoist takes in these

matters, the defence he constructs for vernacular Hours and his specific reasons for providing a French version of the Book of Hours. As we shall see later, the unusual strategy was a timely move: shortly after, the authorities in Rome attempted, but failed – in France at least – to suppress vernacular Hours. However, rather than regarding Benoist as subversive or heterodox, once again, it seems that we should return to a much earlier period to understand the theologian's point of view.

Before we consider this peritextual material, let us remind ourselves of the situation in which Benoist found himself in 1569. In the previous year, he had published his second vernacular Bible and this exacerbated further the problems he was experiencing with his colleagues at the Faculty of Theology. The Book of Hours was thus assembled during a period of controversy. It is therefore interesting that the theologian should choose to publish another potentially controversial text containing Scripture just one year later. Furthermore, he appears keen to be associated personally with the project; he adds *advertissements*, his name to the title (another rare move), and both 1569 Hours carry the royal privilege granted to him for his work as a whole from 1563. The works thus bear Benoist's stamp.¹⁵⁵ He adopted the form and, as can be seen from the Hours bearing his name which followed, made it his own.

Benoist's additions are in total relatively substantial; his presence is felt by the reader at several important stages in the text. The French-only edition contains an *advertissement* to the reader at the beginning of the work,¹⁵⁶ one concerning the calendar,¹⁵⁷ one to introduce the Gospel passages, and then a further *advertissement* introducing the Hours of the Virgin and the psalms within this text. The bilingual edition contains in addition a treatise on prayer and a final

¹⁵⁵ This was perhaps in itself a selling point.

¹⁵⁶ This is dated 1569, suggesting that this was indeed the first year in which Benoist published Hours.

¹⁵⁷ Other Hours do have these, but they are far less discursive and contain less personal opinion.

advertissement to conclude.¹⁵⁸ We will concentrate firstly on the position adopted by Benoist in these texts on controversial topics related to vernacular Books of Hours, such as psalm translation and prayers in the vernacular, before turning to examine what the theologian claims to be his reasons for providing a vernacular Book of Hours.

a) Benoist and psalm translation

Benoist's attitude to psalms and psalm translation can at the very least be surmised from the 'Advertissement touchant les psalmes et heures canoniales'.¹⁵⁹ In this, we see that he defends his actions by using the argument that psalm translation is a traditional practice. He highlights the longstanding popularity of the Psalter and its excellence, stressing the doctrinal and instructional aspects to be found in this particular part of Scripture, particularly in guiding one to the proper worship of God; he quite clearly believes that there is a great deal to be gained by disseminating the Psalter to the laity in this form:

Par l'instinct du saint Esprit les psalmes de David ont tousjours esté frequentez en l'Eglise de Dieu: et ce pour deux raisons principalement. La premiere est, par ce qu'entre toute l'escriture sainte ils sont pleins de doctrine et instruction divine et celeste. La seconde, est par ce qu'ils contiennent excellemment les choses principalement requises au service de Dieu, sçavoir est les louanges d'iceluy seigneur Dieu eternal, avec toutes sortes d'actions de graces et prieres.¹⁶⁰

When Benoist refers to the widespread use of the Psalter in a way that he clearly finds acceptable and perhaps wishes to see emulated once again, he is undoubtedly referring to the situation in the late medieval and pre-Reformation periods. Psalms had always been popular material both in Latin (for example, in Books of Hours) and in the vernacular. If we look briefly at the history of psalm translation to understand the kinds of trends with which Benoist seems most

¹⁵⁸ The peritextual additions included in Benoist's 1569 Hours do not appear in the subsequent Benoist editions that I have consulted.

¹⁵⁹ This is positioned before the Hours of the Virgin (fol. F2^v).

¹⁶⁰ Benoist-Kerver 1569(2), 'Advertissement touchant les psalmes et heures canoniales', fol. F2^v.

familiar, we find that the Psalter was one of the first parts of the Bible to be translated into French.¹⁶¹ Moreover, as Pierre-Maurice Bogaert and Christian Cannuyer comment, ‘de tous les livres de la Bible, le Psautier est celui qui, dès le moyen âge, avait le plus servi aux exercices de piété.’¹⁶² In the sixteenth century, their popularity continued, but psalms in the vernacular became controversial; they were, of course, directly linked to vernacular translations of the Bible and vernacular prayers, which humanists, evangelicals and then Protestants had advocated, as we have already seen. We have also observed that those continuing to support these ideas were in danger of being viewed as heterodox after the spread of Lutheranism, although many had only been seeking spiritual renewal, a closer relationship with God and the internal reform of the Church.

In pre-Reform movements, by which we have recognised that Benoist was influenced, vernacular versions of the psalms were particularly well regarded, whilst those such as Erasmus, Marguerite de Navarre, and Rabelais all targeted the empty, uncomprehending recitation of psalms in Latin.¹⁶³ As has been indicated previously, Erasmus was concerned with both Scriptural translation and prayers that could be understood:

Pourquoi paraît-il inconvenant que quelqu’un prononce l’Evangile dans cette langue, où il est né et qu’il comprend: le Français en français, le Breton en breton, le Germain en germanique, l’Indien en indien? Ce qui me paraît bien plus inconvenant, ou mieux, ridicule, c’est que des gens sans instruction et des femmes, ainsi que des perroquets, marmottent leurs Psaumes et leur Oraison dominicale en latin, alors qu’ils ne comprennent pas ce qu’ils prononcent. Pour moi, d’accord avec saint Jérôme, je me féliciterais plutôt de la gloire de la croix, je considérerais le résultat comme particulièrement magnifique et triomphal, si toutes les langues, toutes les races la célébraient, si le laboureur, au manche de la charrue, chantait en sa langue quelques couplets des psaumes mystiques, si le tisserand, devant son métier, modulait quelque passage de l’Evangile, soulageant ainsi son travail, que le patron, appuyé à son gouvernail, en fredonnât un morceau; qu’enfin, pendant que la mère de famille est assise à sa quenouille, une camarade ou une parente lui en lût à haute voix des fragments.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶¹ On early verse translations, see Bogaert, pp. 16-18, 258; on early verse translations before Clément Marot’s, see Jeanneret, pp. 33-50. For early prose translations, see Bogaert, pp. 16, 22-23, 259. See also Jeanneret, pp. 15-16.

¹⁶² Bogaert, p. 75.

¹⁶³ See Jeanneret, p. 17.

¹⁶⁴ Found in the preface of Erasmus’ *Paraphrasis in Evangelium Matthaei* (Mayence, 1522), cited and translated in Ferdinand Brunot, *Histoire de la langue française des origines à nos jours*, 13 vols (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1966-72), II (1967), 17-18. See also Jeanneret, p. 20.

The allusion to workers of all conditions singing the psalms can be found elsewhere in the work of Erasmus¹⁶⁵ as well as in Clément Marot,¹⁶⁶ and is used later by Protestants. However, Benoist criticises the way that the heretics use the psalms and distances himself from the Protestant usage of the Psalter.¹⁶⁷

Michel Jeanneret is careful to distinguish between Erasmus' and Lefèvre's very different approaches to the Psalter, due to their differing personalities and forms of piety. He argues that the humanist was chiefly interested in the practical use of the Bible for the individual in everyday life and that he took a more intellectual, logical, and dispassionate approach. The spiritual dimension of the poetry of the Psalter was lost on him; for scientific and affective reasons, the New Testament was of greater interest. On the other hand, Jeanneret describes Lefèvre as someone seeking access to a superior spiritual level, a mystic experience, and desiring a return of sincerity and depth to the traditional practices to which he was genuinely attached. Lefèvre was influenced by neo-platonic thought and the *devotio moderna* movement; he recognised the use of the Psalter in spiritual exercises. Marot produced his psalm translations to suit the literary and religious tastes of Marguerite's court, which were highly influenced by Lefèvre. By looking at the role played by the Psalter in devotional trends, Jeanneret rightly identifies a continuum from the Middle Ages to the Reformation, with evangelicals such as Lefèvre – who was influenced by medieval piety and inclined to mystic practices – acting as intermediaries.¹⁶⁸ Benoist's work thus develops at least some of these devotional trends as they would have perhaps evolved had the Reformation not intervened. However, as with the Bible, he had seen the damaging applications of several of the ideas propagated by humanists and evangelicals; with the benefit of hindsight, he took what was workable and useful for the laity in the Counter-Reformation era and adapted it accordingly.

¹⁶⁵ For example, in the 'Paraclesis' of his *Novum Instrumentum*. See Chapter 3.

¹⁶⁶ Jeanneret directs us to Clément Marot's *Epître aux Dames de France* included in editions of Marot's version of the French Psalter from 1543. Jeanneret, pp. 20-21, n. 23.

¹⁶⁷ See the final sentence of Benoist's *advertissement* at note 173 below.

As intimated above, Erasmus' vision of laymen singing parts of the Psalter was taken up by Protestants. Translations of the Psalter (particularly verse translations such as those by Marot) became almost exclusively associated with Protestants, who appeared to have wrested the vernacular Psalter from the Gallican Church.¹⁶⁹ Jeanneret notes that around sixty poets worked on verse translations alone throughout the sixteenth century,¹⁷⁰ whilst Higman records seventy-five printed editions of the psalms (prose and verse) in French between 1513 and 1553.¹⁷¹ The earliest of these were undoubtedly connected to the kind of pre-Reform movements in which Benoist was interested, including those which merely aimed to provide vernacular religious works for the laity. After the Protestants had claimed the Psalter for themselves, it took some time for a convincing Catholic response. However, Catholic authors eventually fought back; one response was polemic from those such as Artus Desiré, who attacked the Reformers and their work.¹⁷² Rather than merely attacking the opposition and neglecting the needs of the laity, Benoist's reply seeks to provide the masses with something they obviously desire; however, the theologian insists that this should remain within the bounds of what is acceptable to the Catholic Church. In the latter part of the *advertissement* in which he censures heretics who sing and interpret psalms inappropriately, he makes it clear that psalms should be said by both ecclesiastics and the laity, but only in the context of Hours and in the way interpreted by the Catholic Church:

Or iceux psalmes se doivent dire juxte l'ordinaire des heures canoniales, les Ecclesiastiques de nécessité comme personnages des autres estats et laïques non astraincts de voeuz par devotion: et le tout doibt estre prins au sens de l'Eglise catholique. Ce que ne font les heretiques, qui les exposent et chantent damnablement contre icelle Eglise.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁸ The ideas in the preceding lines are discussed in Jeanneret, pp. 21-22.

¹⁶⁹ See, for instance, Jeanneret, pp. 187-203.

¹⁷⁰ Jeanneret, p. 7.

¹⁷¹ B70-144 in Higman, *Piety and the People*. Although condemned from 1543, Marot's psalms appeared in fifty-two editions up to 1551; however, this does not match the popularity of the Psalter upon its completion by de Bèze in 1562. *Piety and the People*, pp. 7-8.

¹⁷² See Artus Desiré, *Le Contrepoison des cinquante-deux chansons de Clément Marot*, ed. by Jacques Pineaux (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1977); see also Jeanneret, pp. 188-94.

¹⁷³ Benoist-Kerver 1569(2), 'Advertissement touchant les psalmes et heures canoniales', fol. F2^v.

Although Benoist again provides a translation of parts of Scripture against the wishes of members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, his agenda is to provide a work of use to the masses; by emphasising its instructional value and traditional roots, Benoist is surely revealing that he has been influenced by pre-Reform currents.

Not only does Benoist defend his actions by suggesting that it is traditional for psalms to be provided for the laity; in his first *advertissement*, he reproduces this defence for both vernacular Hours and the Bible:

[...] comme en la sainte Bible, ainsi en ces livres dits vulgairement, Heures, ou est proposée aux simples la maniere de prier Dieu et dire son service, selon la forme de l'Eglise Catholique, mere et regle des vrais et obeissans Chrestiens, voyant et considerant que de tout temps ils ont eu cours en la Chrestienté (car qui pourra monstrier les premieres Heures mises en françois non plus que la premiere Bible, jaçoit que l'un n'ait esté et encore ne doive estre indifferemment communiqué, permis et divulgué à tous comme l'autre) j'ay pensé faire quelque chose pour les Chrestiens [...]¹⁷⁴

When Benoist suggests that one of these texts should not be circulated indiscriminately, he is undoubtedly referring to the Bible; we have seen him use the same argument before. The theologian appears to link vernacular editions of these two texts in his mind. This is the connection someone interested in pre-Reform publications would make; both were being produced in the early 1500s.

a) Benoist and prayers

i) To whom should one pray?

By turning our attention to the issues which arise from Benoist providing a translation of another part of Scripture, extracts from the Gospels, we can see where the emphasis lies within these peritextual additions. In fact, throughout the material, the theologian is most concerned with Christ and praying to God; little

¹⁷⁴ Benoist-Kerver 1569(2), 'Advertissement au Lecteur', fols A2^r-A3^r (fol. A2^r).

if any reference is made to Mary. The *advertissement* positioned before the Gospel Sequences highlights Benoist's concerns:

J'ay pensé estre bon et utile à tous si les suivans Evangiles estoient inserez au commencement de ce livre de prieres, par ce que en iceux les principaux poincts et fondemens de nostre salut et religion sont comprins et proposez.¹⁷⁵ Pourquoi il est bon de les sçavoir, et lire souvent: afin que tous sachent où ils doivent fonder et dresser leurs prieres et oraisons. Il fault donc lisant ces Evangiles suyvantes diligemment entendre, noter et retenir les choses proposées en icelles, sçavoir est l'Oraison, le Testament et Passion de nostre Seigneur Jesus Christ. Car telles choses sont le fondement de nostre salut et nous enhardissent de prier Dieu.¹⁷⁶

As with the psalms in the *advertissement* above, he acknowledges the use and value of reading Scripture; these particular passages, he claims, contain the foundation of salvation and religion. It is perhaps significant that Benoist should choose to make the link to prayer to God and that much of the final *advertissement* positioned at the conclusion of the Latin-French Hours should underline the importance of Christ as taught in the Bible;¹⁷⁷ Protestants would have us believe that Catholics had lost sight of God and Christ behind the cult of the Virgin. Despite providing a prayer-book which contains prayers primarily directed to the Virgin, the overwhelming thrust of Benoist's peritextual additions is that prayer should be directed elsewhere; indeed, one of the most substantial additions to the contents of the Latin-French Hours is a collection of prayers which address these other parties.¹⁷⁸

ii) Should prayers be in the vernacular?

What then does Benoist have to say on the language of these prayers? We have seen that in the 1520s, the Faculty of Theology had taken against Gringore's

¹⁷⁵ In fact, it is traditional to have these particular Gospel passages included and in this position.

¹⁷⁶ Benoist-Kerver 1569(2), 'Advertissement', fol. B3^r.

¹⁷⁷ Benoist concludes 'et pour dire en bref, c'est ce que toute l'escriture sainte et predication de l'Evangile nous propose, sçavoir est d'embrasser par une vraye foy, esperance et charité Jesus Christ Dieu et homme pour nous mort en croix'. Benoist-Kerver 1569(1), 'Advertissement', fol. 248^v.

¹⁷⁸ See note 139; I have not seen this material anywhere else. In addition to this, the treatise on prayer also concerns prayer to God alone; see note 180.

Hours because of their Scriptural translations and against Erasmus' suggestion that prayers should be in the vernacular. This position was not modified at a later date: for example, François Le Picart spoke against the dissemination of Scripture and Books of Hours in French; he saw no additional value in vernacular prayer:

To the women of Paris who want the scriptures in French, he suggests they follow the example of their ancestors: 'Do you believe that the merit of your prayer comes from intelligence? No, all the fruit and merit of prayer comes from the heart, the affections and goodwill. Yet, do you think they are worth more than those of past times because you have books of Hours in French?' 'Do you think that your heart is more raised to God and with Him when you say your Hours in French rather than in Latin?'¹⁷⁹

However, despite careful wording concerning the value of prayers said in Latin, Benoist is clearly supportive of those who wish prayers to be in the vernacular, as we shall see.

In his treatise on prayer,¹⁸⁰ Benoist begins cautiously. He underlines that it is not necessary for the supplicant to understand the prayer in order for it to be granted, because God understands all languages and knows what we want to say before we speak; he argues that the way one approaches prayer is the most important factor:

Cela est tout certain à ceux qui sont versez en la doctrine chrestienne que l'oraison est exaucée de Dieu à cause de la foy, esperance, humilité, charité, perseverance, et autres semblables vertus, et non à cause de l'intelligence de celuy qui prie. Pourquoy ceux qui usent des manieres de prier usitees en l'Eglise Catholique, lesquelles ils n'entendent point, n'en sont pas pour cela moins exaucez de Dieu, qui entend toutes langues, voire aussi sçait ce que nous voulons luy dire devant que nous ayons ouvert la bouche pour parler.¹⁸¹

Benoist emphasises that if one keeps to the traditional methods of the Catholic Church, prayers will be understood by God. But having made this orthodox point

¹⁷⁹ Taylor, *Heresy and Orthodoxy*, p. 95.

¹⁸⁰ Benoist is most expansive on the subject of vernacular prayer in the treatise he adds to his Latin-French Hours, the *Bref et utile discours auquel sont proposees et enseignees choses fort utiles pour bien prier Dieu et entendre que c'est qu'oraison* (Benoist-Kerver 1569(1), fols ẽ2^v-ẽ8^v); a work with a similar title was published with a 1568 edition of the *Manuel de devotion* (PQ158) – it may be the same work. Although indicated in his French Hours (see fol. A3^v), the treatise is not found in the copy I have consulted in the British Library. The treatise is divided into several short chapters; one chapter is devoted to the question of whether the language of prayer should be one that is understood.

¹⁸¹ Benoist-Kerver 1569(1), *Bref et utile discours*, 'S'il faut que l'oraison soit faicte en langage entendu, ou bien autrement', fol. ẽ5^r.

and continuing in this manner by stating that it is approaching prayer in the wrong state which leads to prayers not being answered,¹⁸² the theologian adds important qualifications to his argument. First of all, he insists that priests responsible for prayers said in public in Latin ought to understand what they are saying:

Je ne voudroy pourtant nier que l'oraison entendue (toutes autres choses requises estantes pareilles) ne soit plus excellente que celle qui ne l'est pas, veu que saint Paul en la I. des Corinthes chapitre 14. la prefere: et l'Eglise a tousjours ordonné que les prestres entendent ce qu'ils disent en l'Eglise quand il est question des prieres publiques. C'est pourquoy ils sont examinez s'ils entendent la langue Latine, en laquelle pour plusieurs justes raisons (par nous ailleurs deduictes) le service de l'Eglise occidentale est celebré comme est la Grecque et Hebraique en l'Eglise Orientale.¹⁸³

If we bear in mind Benoist's criticism of incompetent members of the clergy, it seems likely that this analogy has deliberately been chosen to point once again to the shortcomings of numerous priests. The theologian then turns to the subject of personal prayers; no less controversial than in the previous comment, he suggests that although prayers which are understood are no more likely to be fulfilled, they do bring greater pleasure to the person praying:

Que donc les oraisons privees soient entendues, cela ne les fait exaucer d'avantage, jaçoit que ceux qui entendent ayent plus de plaisir et contentement, comme aussi ne les faict reprehensibles, sinon que paradvanture l'intelligence osteroit les conditions requises en l'oraison [...].¹⁸⁴

Although Benoist's rhetoric is different from that of Erasmus, he is not far from taking an Erasmian line; prayer which is understood is better for the supplicant. This position obviously challenges that of many of his colleagues; it is not surprising that questions were raised concerning his orthodoxy, especially if we bear in mind that he had published his second Bible translation the year prior to this.

¹⁸² 'C'est donc indevotion et nonchalance qui empesche que l'oraison ne soit exaucee, et non pas l'ignorance des proprieté des mots par lesquels est prononcee l'oraison.' Benoist-Kerver 1569(1), *Bref et utile discours*, fol. ẽ5^r.

¹⁸³ Benoist-Kerver 1569(1), *Bref et utile discours*, fol. ẽ5^r.

¹⁸⁴ Benoist-Kerver 1569(1), *Bref et utile discours*, fols ẽ5^{r-v}.

c) Benoist's reasons for providing a new French Book of Hours

Let us now focus on Benoist's particular edition of the Book of Hours. In the introductory *advertissement*, he points to three reasons for having undertaken the task of providing a new version of this text. Firstly, he emphasises that he wants to provide an instructional work for the devout layman that has been 'corrected' and updated in such a way that it cannot be criticised by heretics:

[...] j'ay pensé faire quelque chose pour les Chrestiens (principalement devots) qui desirent tousjours plus cognoistre pour plus aimer Dieu, et ce qu'appartient à son saint service, si je les visitois, et corrigeois en plusieurs endroicts, et accommodois tellement que les adversaires de Dieu et de son Eglise, n'y trouvassent occasion de mocquer et blasphemer, selon leur coustume, l'Eglise et les obeissans Chrestiens en icelle.¹⁸⁵

This, of course, recalls the objectives of his involvement with many of the texts we have discussed earlier in this chapter. It is obvious that Benoist saw great value in a return to pre-Reformation works; they had to be edited and brought up-to-date, but once this had been done, they could be used to aid spiritual renewal and thus strengthen the Church. Benoist's use of the word 'cognoistre' could be coincidental or it might be indicative that he had observed that his parishioners wanted to know more and participate more actively in their faith. This would continue the increasingly participative trends prior to the Reformation and it recalls Higman's suggestion that there was a movement throughout the century (which had in fact begun in the pre-Reform era) towards providing more works appealing to the understanding.

Benoist's second point has a polemical edge. The theologian reminds us of his work revising texts, whilst other learned men sit by, before passing on to the question of the lack of religious works in French, which, he implies, is due to the position taken by the Faculty of Theology:

¹⁸⁵ Benoist-Kerver 1569(2), 'Advertissement au Lecteur', fol. A2^{r-v}. Benoist's statement that he has somehow corrected the text in this and the following quotation will be discussed later.

La seconde est, que (ainsi que tous peuvent aisement veoir et juger) il y avoit plusieurs choses dignes de correction, tant en la version qu'ailleurs, lesquelles y estoient laissees en partie pour la rudesse, lourderie, et incapacité du peuple ignorant: en partie aussi, par ce que les hommes doctes desdaignoient quasi s'employer à choses trop petites pour leur grandeur. Jointct aussi, que plusieurs depuis quelque temps voulans remedier à l'abus du peuple fort arrogant et desobeissant en matiere de la foy et religion et profession d'icelle, n'ont este d'avis que ce qui appartient à la religion fust divulgué, et principalement (s'il m'est permis d'ainsi parler) françoise [sic].¹⁸⁶

Although Benoist places some of the blame for the lack of work completed on the laity, he does appear to be criticising fellow theologians for their inactivity, as well as the stance of his colleagues at the Faculty. He seems to be suggesting that he has had to complete this work because nobody else has. This is largely accurate if we consider the numerous instructional texts from the pre-Reform era that he eventually published in the vernacular in the Counter-Reformation period and the absence of other editions of these works.

However, in the concluding thought to his second point, Benoist uses the kind of formula seen in his Bible prefaces; he claims not to be criticising his colleagues' actions and reaffirms his obedience to the Church authorities; this was, after all, written at the time of the Bible controversy when it was unwise to provoke members of the Faculty:¹⁸⁷

Lesquels ne voulant juger ny condamner, non plus que les autres, m'accommodant à la plus commune partie, en attendant la resolution de l'Eglise, j'ay tasché sans rien innover, redresser et aider la devotion et service du peuple.¹⁸⁸

Benoist defends his actions by asserting in the conclusion to this point that he has not introduced new ideas; by underlining the value of his work as a devotional tool for the Christian masses, he reminds his colleagues of the practical worth of his endeavours.

¹⁸⁶ Benoist-Kerver 1569(2), 'Advertissement au Lecteur', fol. A2^v.

¹⁸⁷ This, however, does not stop Benoist from apparently criticising members of the Catholic Church (in this case the clergy) in part of a prayer added to the end of his treatise on prayer: 'Envoyez vostre S. Esprit pour renouveler la face de la terre, nous donnant une bonne et universelle reformation, afin que tous faisans le devoir de leur vocation sans feintise, vous soyez cogneu, honoré et adoré de tous en unité d'esprit et de foy.' Benoist-Kerver 1569(1), 'Oraison fort utile et convenable à toutes personnes, pour dire souvent es derniers temps', fols ã7^v-ã8^v (fol. ã8^v).

¹⁸⁸ Benoist-Kerver 1569(2), 'Advertissement au Lecteur', fol. A2^v.

In Benoist's third and final point, he turns to condemning the laity. This time, he praises the instructive works published by fellow Catholic authors; however, he expresses his alarm that the laity finds reading this type of instructive books preferable to saying their Hours, a practice which they have abandoned:

La troisieme et principale est, que le peuple fort inconstant, leger et voltigeant en la profession de la religion et service de Dieu, abuse trop de la bonté de Dieu, qui luy a envoyé en ce temps plusieurs hommes doctes et catholiques, lesquels se sont emploiez à divulguer plusieurs beaux livres pleins de grande instruction, desquels plusieurs contre l'intention des auteurs (qui ne demandent que les instruire, consoler et fortifier contre les vices et heresies) ont abusé, laissant pour la leçon d'iceux, soit en l'Eglise ou ailleurs, à dire leurs Heures, ainsi qu'elles sont proposees par le commun consentement de l'Eglise.¹⁸⁹

Benoist seems disturbed that the new instructive works (by whom I am not yet sure) are replacing traditional devotional works; this suggests a shift in devotional practice borne out by the decline in numbers of editions of Hours. He appears to be concerned by the new trends and wishes to see a return to traditional devotional practices seen at the beginning of the century.

Thus Benoist's three reasons for providing a newly-edited French Book of Hours highlight his concern for supplying the laity with this type of text and the practical value of his work against the criticisms of Protestants; they also seem to reveal an attack on his colleagues and bemoan the laity's neglect of traditional devotional practices. At each turn, he appears to be influenced by pre-Reform movements; these influences and the objectives seen here were obviously instrumental when at a later date he published works such as the *Vita Christi* and *Grand Ordinaire*.

In fact, the closing words of Benoist's final *advertissement* sum up much of his work in general; he claims that he has been forced to make corrections to this text and to others for the glory of God, praise of Christ, instruction of the masses and destruction of heresy:

¹⁸⁹ Benoist-Kerver 1569(2), 'Advertissement au Lecteur', fols A2^v-A3^r.

Mais il le [Christ] faut embrasser purement et saintement, fuyant tout erreur, abus, superstition et mensonge: desquelles choses n'a besoing la religion chrestienne en sa profession salutaire: que ce m'a contrainct corriger quelques choses intolerables icy et ailleurs,¹⁹⁰ à la gloire de Dieu, exaltation de Jesus Christ, instruction des simples chrestiens: et confusion des heretiques.¹⁹¹

Before we draw this section to a conclusion, let us reflect briefly on Benoist's corrections of 'quelques choses intolerables' in the Book of Hours. At no point does he indicate what it is that he has changed. His editions differ from Latin Hours in that they do not promise indulgences or offer days remission from purgatory; images inappropriate to a work of devotion have also been suppressed (for instance, Benoist's Hours do not have woodcuts of the astrological man or sibyls). However, in all of these things, the theologian was only copying the work of those who had published Hours prior to his; beyond these elements, it is hard to see what he has done, unless he is referring to slight revisions in the Scriptural translations.¹⁹²

Conclusion

The peritextual additions combine many of the aspects of Benoist's work in general: the juxtaposition of the polemical and the devotional, concern for providing 'purified' religious works for the laity in the vernacular (although sometimes with little evidence of what he has done), belief in the importance of at least some Scriptural translation and a battle against two opponents: the Protestant heretics – who in spite of their errors saw the need to instruct in the vernacular and who made pertinent criticisms of abuses in the Catholic Church – and his own colleagues within the Catholic Church, who failed to appreciate the need for change.

¹⁹⁰ By 'elsewhere', he is perhaps referring to his recently published Bibles.

¹⁹¹ Benoist-Kerver 1569(1), 'Advertissement', fol. 248^v.

¹⁹² If he used Bourssette 1554 as his model, it was possibly he who changed the Protestant 'Eternel' to Seigneur and who intervened in the translation of John in the 1569 Latin-French Hours to use 'verbe' rather than 'parole'. These are minor alterations and the latter modification does not appear in subsequent Hours.

The *advertissements* reveal a sometimes controversial point of view on issues such as vernacular prayers, but Benoist did not have Protestant sympathies; instead, everything directs us to the conclusion that he was greatly interested in pre-Reformation currents. On a final note, we have not yet touched upon the theologian's Gallicanism; in his peritextual material, he provides a robust defence of vernacular Hours and, as we shall see from the findings of our final section, this indicates his allegiance to the Gallican rather than the Roman Catholic Church.

IV) The post-Tridentine reform of the Book of Hours

Around the same time that Benoist was preparing his first Book of Hours, the authorities in Rome were overseeing the reform of several essential Catholic texts. The new Catechism, Breviary and Missal were promulgated in 1566, 1568 and 1570 respectively, the revised Book of Hours (the *Officium beatae Mariae Virginis*) in 1571.¹⁹³ In 1563 at the Council of Trent, the first three texts had been named for reform under the direction of the pope;¹⁹⁴ the Book of Hours – amongst other texts – had not actually been mentioned by name, which perhaps accounts for the lack of discussion in later studies on its reform.¹⁹⁵ Here, we consider several of the reasons and impulses behind this new edition, the form it took and the effect it had on the Book of Hours in France, including Benoist's.

¹⁹³ Bowen, p. 63 (see also pp. 3-4).

¹⁹⁴ *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, ed. by Tanner, II, 797.

¹⁹⁵ Bowen also finds it difficult to uncover any research carried out on the reform of this text (see Bowen, p. 4, n. 7) and Lacombe makes only a passing reference (Lacombe, pp. LXXVII-LXXVIII).

a) The papal bull and its immediate consequences

i) The contents of the papal bull

When the Book of Hours was reformed under Pope Pius V, the authorities wished it to circulate in Latin and in a very specific form; several different forms of a text outlining Rome's position can be found in the *Officia* of 1571 and thereafter.¹⁹⁶ To summarise,¹⁹⁷ the text indicates that the new Book of Hours has been reformed following similar reforms of the Breviary and Missal; superfluous material, apparently added to Hours because of the greed of printers (and which led to superstitious practices), is condemned.¹⁹⁸ Throughout the text, emphasis is placed on the fact that only Rome's newly compiled Office should be used and then only in a certain order.¹⁹⁹ Vernacular Hours, as well as some in Latin, are banned.²⁰⁰ Exceptionally, permission is given to continue ancient Uses in use for

¹⁹⁶ If inserted at all, the material is found at the beginning of the work, usually in Latin. In my experience, the full text of the papal ban is only occasionally provided (see, for example, [Office of the Virgin Mary] (Rome: in Aedibus Populi Romani, 1571), fols $\dagger 2^r$ - $\dagger 6^v$); more often a short text with only the newly granted indulgences is printed, or a text between these two in length dated 1572, which summarises the relevant papal bull (see, for example, [Office of the Virgin Mary] (Antwerp: Plantin, 1573), (BL C.111.c.28), pp. 3-6). Sometimes, although infrequently, the text can be found in French. I have so far found two forms in this language: firstly, a full translation of the 1571 text (see [Office of the Virgin Mary] ([Paris?]: Foucault, 1607), fols a2^r-a6^v and in [Office of the Virgin Mary] (Paris: Foucault, 1609), fols a2^r-a7^v) and secondly, a short extract from the previous text providing only the indulgences (see, for example, [Office of the Virgin Mary] (Paris: Ballagny, 1638), fol. $\tilde{a}2^r$). The full text is dated 15 March 1571 from St Peter's in Rome and is signed 'Ferdinand Cardinal de Medicis, Summateur. Caesar Glorierius. Octavius de Avila'; a notice then follows dated 5 April 1571, indicating that the preceding text has been posted at various points around Rome (see [Office of the Virgin Mary] (Paris: Foucault, 1609), fol. a7^v). This material quite obviously did not meet with approval in all quarters: I have encountered copies where the prefaces have been removed (see, for instance, [Office of the Virgin Mary] (Antwerp: Plantin, 1573), (Bod Douce BB 158) and [Office of the Virgin Mary] (Antwerp: Plantin, 1575), (Bod 8^o O 9 Th.)) or parts crossed out (see [Office of the Virgin Mary] (Antwerp: ex officina Plantiniana, apud Viduam et J. Moretum, 1593), (Bod 8^o C 440 Linc.), fols A5^r-^v, in which the indulgences have been obliterated).

¹⁹⁷ I list the main issues of interest to this study taken from the fullest version of the papal bull. Because of the lengthy nature of the quotations, I have provided transcriptions of the relevant sections in Appendix 5, to which I shall refer. These have been taken from the French version of the text in [Office of the Virgin Mary] (Paris: Foucault, 1609).

¹⁹⁸ Appendix 5, Part A.

¹⁹⁹ See, for instance, Appendix 5, Parts B, C and E.

²⁰⁰ Appendix 5, Parts B and D.

the last two hundred years, but the vernacular is prohibited in every case.²⁰¹ In addition, the text stresses that the vernacular prayers found in Hours are forbidden to the laity and condemns prayers spuriously attributed to saints and the indulgences offered for the repetition of them,²⁰² whilst outlining the new indulgences that are sanctioned.²⁰³ It states that vernacular Hours should be handed to the Inquisition;²⁰⁴ indeed, preachers and those hearing confession are enlisted to combat these editions.²⁰⁵

ii) Effects of the reform: Benoist's response and the new *Officia*

Quite obviously, the authorities in Rome do not wish to see versions of the Book of Hours such as Benoist's. They make it clear that they do not want vernacular Hours and at least some types of vernacular prayer. As we have already seen, Benoist ignored this, although it should be noted that the next edition of his Book of Hours came ten years after his first edition (1579); perhaps Rome was the cause of the delay, combined with the fact that he was occupied with other ventures. However, despite the relatively lengthy pause before his 1579 Hours was printed, the theologian did eventually publish another edition and numerous editions later followed. In his role as *curé*, Benoist is enjoined by his superiors in Rome to rid Christendom of vernacular Hours; it seems ironic that he should be the major force behind providing the masses in France with such texts, although, he would claim, after reforming the work himself.²⁰⁶

Benoist's *advertissements* show agreement that the Book of Hours needed to be re-edited, but his efforts fall short of what Rome has in mind; we have seen that

²⁰¹ Appendix 5, Part C.

²⁰² Appendix 5, Part D.

²⁰³ Appendix 5, Part F.

²⁰⁴ Appendix 5, Part E.

²⁰⁵ Appendix 5, Part G.

²⁰⁶ Perhaps his 'corrections' to the Book of Hours and then more substantial changes to the saints' lives were inspired by the discussions at Trent in the early 1560s. (The martyrology was also reformed; see Bowen, p. 4, n. 7.)

his modifications were not extensive, and, of course, the text remains in the vernacular. But what then was the nature of the papal reform? Karen Bowen gives an account of its objectives, which in general seem to have been to remove those elements that were apocryphal or led to superstitious practices:

The focus appears to have been on returning to a more traditional, historically grounded text by eliminating extra apocryphal texts and ones that would encourage improper superstitious beliefs. This intent is confirmed by Christopher Witcombe's analysis of a letter from 8 March 1572, written by Cardinal Alfonso Gesualdo to Pius V, in which Gesualdo advises the Pope on how the book of hours should be revised. According to Witcombe, Gesualdo suggested the elimination of several texts previously included in the book of hours as well as a new arrangement of the sections that were to be included, with the goals of shortening the text and eliminating 'all that was apocryphal and that which could possibly create scandal.'²⁰⁷

Indeed, the arrangement of the various elements of the Book of Hours in the *Officia* is different from that of the vernacular Hours from the 1550s and 1560s, giving, as the title suggests, more prominence to the Hours of the Virgin and in addition to this, certain parts, such as many of the traditional accessory prayers, are suppressed.²⁰⁸ In the earliest *Officia*, the rhymes and quatrains of those Hours printed in gothic characters have been removed, as have traditional images, such as the astrological man and other non-religious depictions. In terms of appearance, most of the *Officia* are elegantly and clearly presented: roman characters appear throughout and copperplates rather than woodcuts are used, although woodcuts are present in some of the early *Officia*. When Paul Saenger referred to 'the austere decorated books printed by Christopher Plantin', he was perhaps thinking of Plantin's editions of the *Officia* sanctioned by Rome.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁷ Bowen, p. 152, citing Christopher L. C. E. Witcombe, 'Christopher Plantin's Papal Privileges: Documents in the Vatican Archives', in *De Gulden Passer*, 69 (1991), 133-43 (pp. 139-42).

²⁰⁸ In 1572, Christopher Plantin was granted the non-exclusive rights by Pius V to print *Officia*; he subsequently published 37 editions between 1572 and 1589 (Bowen, pp. 63-64, 125-26). For descriptions of his *Officia* (in which a clear impression of the contents is given) see Bowen, pp. 125-84; also Witcombe, 140-42. The large numbers of *Officia* published by Plantin would suggest that, although the popularity of Hours had decreased overall, some new forms of Hours could still find a willing readership.

²⁰⁹ Bowen reproduces many photographs of his and other publishers' *Officia*; see figs 72-102, 104-07, 110-114, 124-30, 132-36, 152.

b) Impact in the medium to long term

i) Erosion in the form of the *Officia*

As we have seen, despite the efforts of Rome, the authorities did not succeed in ridding France of vernacular Hours; furthermore, their attempts to maintain their own *Officia* in a certain form were futile. For instance, we find a copy of an early seventeenth-century Parisian Office, apparently for Marie de Medici, the Queen Regent, bound with numerous prayers in the vernacular: there are several French prayers by the Jesuit, P. Coton; French prayers compiled by F. Jean Robert; prayers addressed to the Virgin by Bonaventure and others; the verse prayer to St Margaret dating from the thirteenth-century, and finally the prayer to St Genevieve.²¹⁰ In the same edition, we find the full version of the text outlining the papal ban, which condemns at least some of these texts.²¹¹ Another edition demonstrates further that old habits die hard: in a 1636 Parisian Office, we see a return to the French quatrains of the previous century.²¹² Quatrains appear throughout the work; for example, at the beginning of the Office of the Virgin we find:

Nature humaine estant perie,
Pour ceste grande playe estancher,
Dieu envoya son fils tres cher,
Ce qu'annonça l'Ange à Marie.²¹³

This rhyme was found, for instance, in Merlin's 1555 French Hours.²¹⁴ Other copies show that the Book of Hours still retained its status as an object to be admired for its aesthetic qualities, in whatever form the contents were presented. Particularly finely-bound *Officia* can be seen in the Broxbourne collection in the

²¹⁰ [Office of the Virgin Mary] (Paris: Foucault, 1609).

²¹¹ Those in Rome would no doubt have accepted the new prayers by the Jesuit Coton, which, as we saw previously in this chapter, Reinburg characterises as embracing Tridentine doctrine and Counter-Reformation attitudes. This is the sort of Office that Reinburg suggests dominated in France in the Counter-Reformation period.

²¹² [Office of the Virgin Mary] (Paris: Ballagny, 1636).

²¹³ [Office of the Virgin Mary] (Paris: Ballagny, 1636), fol. C6^r.

²¹⁴ See Appendix 4.

Bodleian.²¹⁵ This reveals the return of certain traditional elements missing from the *Officia* of the early 1570s and indicates that ultimately Rome could not exert control over what was bound with the officially sanctioned Office or over how it was presented; it also shows the desire of the laity to offer at least some prayers in the vernacular at this time. Quite clearly, several traditional elements were too deeply embedded in the laity's consciousness for them to be suppressed for long.

ii) The consequences of Benoist's independence; continuing debate surrounding vernacular translations of the Book of Hours

This erosion of the form of the *Officia* perhaps concerned Rome; however, we can be more certain that they were disturbed by Benoist's Hours which opposed the papal ban in several fundamental respects. Nevertheless, as yet, I have found no indication that anyone in either Rome or Paris tried to suppress Benoist's Hours. It seems that it was less surprising that there was no opposition from the French Catholic Church; Bernard Chédozeau questions the familiarity of the French with both Tridentine and Roman legislation;²¹⁶ of course, the decrees of the Council of Trent were not ratified in France.²¹⁷ However, merely because I have not as yet found evidence of Rome's disapproval of Benoist for his involvement with the Book of Hours with its various controversial elements does not mean that such disapproval did not exist. Indeed, Chédozeau suggests that the theologian's translation of the Hours was a contributory factor in his not receiving papal bulls for a bishopric:

Ce confesseur de Marie Stuart connaît l'Écosse et les exigences des réformés en matière biblique et liturgique; il est accusé d'avoir dit qu'il n'administrerait le Saint-Sacrement qu'à ceux 'qui savaient et faisaient profession de dire l'oraison dominicale en français';²¹⁸

²¹⁵ See, for instance, [Office of the Virgin Mary] (Venice: Gryphius, 1574), (Bod Broxb. 11.20): this has an embroidered Venetian binding with medallion portraits to the front and rear.

²¹⁶ Chédozeau, *La Bible et la liturgie en français*, pp. 73-74.

²¹⁷ R. Doucet, *Les Institutions de la France au XVI^e siècle*, 2 vols (Paris: Picard, 1948), II, 675-76.

²¹⁸ See *Journal d'un curé ligueur de Paris sous les trois derniers Valois*, ed. by De Barthélemy, p. 190.

il traduit en français les *Heures de Notre-Dame à l'usage de Rome* (1579), l'*Office de la Vierge Marie* (1614 ou 1615), textes dont la traduction en langue vernaculaire est interdite par la Congrégation de l'Index – Rome s'en souviendra lorsqu'il sera question de lui donner un évêché.²¹⁹

Throughout this thesis and now in this chapter, our findings suggest that Benoist chose to adopt a position that was independent of that of Rome; he was interested in serving the Gallican Church and its congregations rather than in showing loyalty to Rome. He may indeed have paid the price for this in his lack of success at gaining a bishopric.

Chédozeau perceives two factions within the French Catholic Church that continued into the seventeenth century: the 'ultramontains' (or 'catholiques-romains français') on the one hand and the 'catholiques gallicans' on the other;²²⁰ the former group were against the availability of vernacular versions of Scripture and liturgy. He demonstrates the difficulties for those in France who wished to provide translations of the Book of Hours in the seventeenth century – contested by the 'ultramontains' because of the liturgical roots of the Hours – by relating the controversy of the Port-Royal Hours which was published in 1650.²²¹ The debate relating to the Port-Royal Hours is beyond the scope of this present study, but indicates that vernacular Books of Hours remained a contentious issue several decades after Benoist's death. Let us end our considerations here by noting that the theologian's attitude to both Scriptural and liturgical translations indicates Gallican tendencies.

²¹⁹ Chédozeau, p. 111 (Chédozeau's dating needs to be revised).

²²⁰ Chédozeau, pp. 102-03; see also my Chapter 3.

²²¹ According to Chédozeau, the ultramontane faction was very hostile to liturgical translations in particular (Chédozeau, p. 116). With this in mind, he outlines two important seventeenth-century conflicts in France related to liturgical translation, that surrounding the *Heures de Port-Royal* in 1650 and that of J. de Voisin's *Messel romain* in 1660-61 (Chédozeau, pp. 117-37; reference to Pius V's position was still being made at this late date (see Chédozeau, pp. 121-22)); the Port-Royal Hours caused controversy at home with the French Jesuits and abroad in Rome, the latter leading to censure in 1651 (Chédozeau, p. 119).

CONCLUSION

Building on the ideas contained in the opening chapters of this thesis, the detailed examinations of Benoist's activities surrounding the Bible and the Book of Hours and the survey of certain of the theologian's other vernacular religious works yield several important conclusions. Most importantly, it seems that Benoist was greatly concerned that the laity should be provided with instructional works in the vernacular; he maintained that this helped both to sustain the faithful and to replace heretical versions of texts fulfilling similar purposes. The popularity of his work suggests that this was exactly what the laity wanted. By choosing to publish devotional or didactic works such as the Book of Hours and the *Grand Ordinaire*, the theologian's abiding interest in pre-Reformation texts is indicated; the fact that he continued to publish further editions of the Book of Hours after 1571 shows that, as with his French Bible, he was unafraid to oppose the ecclesiastical authorities in Rome. Benoist ensured that Rome's wishes concerning Books of Hours were not adhered to and that vernacular Hours continued to be published in France. As we have seen throughout this study, the theologian's allegiance was primarily to the Gallican Church.

Benoist held what were controversial views in the Counter-Reformation period on questions such as the availability of Scripture in the vernacular and whether prayers should be understood or not. His beliefs can be traced back to the early decades of the 1500s and they are not signs of heterodoxy. It may seem provocative that his Book of Hours contains translations from Calvin's 1546 Genevan Bible and that his Bible borrows from the text and paratext of Protestant Bibles; however, examination of similar works published prior to Benoist's shows that he or his publisher or printer merely copied the work of predecessors and that this was the accepted practice of the time. The 'translation' and editorial techniques employed by Benoist in these and other texts suggest that he acted as an enabler, unconcerned with detail but keen to make certain texts available to the

Catholic masses as quickly as possible; as we saw at the beginning of Chapter 4, he had an extensive programme of works that he wished to see through the press and he could not devote large amounts of time to each publication to guarantee a more polished product.

The theologian sought to publish texts in the vernacular that would help to bring about renewal and reform within the Catholic Church through the instruction of the laity, as had writers like Jean Bouchet several decades before. Many of the titles point to Benoist's interest in pre-Reformation currents and he often appears to share the Gallican preoccupations of those operating in the early 1500s, for instance, highlighting the problem of clerical abuses. At times, there are signs that the theologian had been inspired by the work of humanists and evangelicals, although he is generally more guarded about revealing his sympathy for these reforming movements, and prefers to defend his position by recalling late medieval tradition and practices. If he does use humanist and evangelical ideas, he appears to adapt them to make them practicable within the Catholic Church; by the Counter-Reformation period, even Protestants had come to recognise that it was ill-advised to disseminate Scripture without some form of guidance, for instance, marginal notes. The more precise nature of Benoist's approach to bringing about renewal has been discussed throughout this thesis; it is evident that this differed from that of others of his time. The controversy surrounding his French Bible demonstrates that the theologian's work sometimes provoked hostility from his own colleagues and that his energies were required to fight adversaries within his own Church, as well as the Protestant threat.

It is perhaps surprising that the nature of Benoist's publishing agenda has remained unobserved for so long, when Benoist himself provided a substantial amount of commentary on the project he was undertaking. His comments are remarkable in their quantity and the places in which they can be found; as this thesis has demonstrated, many of his most illuminating remarks are located in the paratext to his works, for example, in the peritextual additions to his Book of

Hours. As we noted in Chapter 4, the inclusion of this material in a Book of Hours was highly unusual. However, it was not an unusual move for the theologian, who frequently supplied this kind of material for works of all types, and who quite evidently understood the use to which paratext could be put in expressing opinions, arguing a point and influencing the readership.

We must remember that Benoist lived in the latter half of the sixteenth century, which brought significant obstacles to what he wanted to achieve. Before the spread of Lutheranism, those who were interested in renewal within the Church, the instruction of the laity and the reform of the clergy could act without being viewed as schismatic or heretical. Benoist worked in a religious and political climate where this kind of freedom was not guaranteed. He was, however, able to see past stances which were counterproductive in that they refused to acknowledge the need for change and he somehow managed to succeed in several publishing ventures which appeared to go against the flow of opinion amongst his own colleagues, as the Bible affair mentioned above indicates. He had the protection of those such as the Bishop of Paris and the monarchy, but just as importantly, he had the support of the laity, whose needs he appears to have understood. Chapter 1 has shown that Benoist has sometimes been criticised for his ignorance and lack of learning; however, such judgements run contrary to his accomplishments and ability to survive in an often dangerous political climate. He was obviously a shrewd political operator. In the 1590s, others were apparently murdered for criticising the excesses of the Church or for siding with the monarchy;¹ Benoist avoided this fate and thrived. Although the theologian looked to the past for solutions to problems, he was grounded in the sometimes violent realities of late sixteenth-century France and the Wars of Religion.

¹ Chauveau, the *curé* of Saint-Gervais, and Bérenger, Henri III's preacher, were both poisoned in 1594. The former, who died in August, was rumoured to have been killed because of his attacks on abuses within the Church; the latter was murdered in December for his loyalty to the crown rather than the League. See L'Estoile, *Mémoires-Journaux*, VI, 225 and 250.

Much has been said about the change in nature of vernacular religious texts during the sixteenth century, particularly in the final chapter of this thesis; Francis Higman credits Reformers and Protestants with works of more intellectual substance. However, in France, the Protestants were not victorious and they were unable to provide the French masses with what they sought. Perhaps we should consider whether, in fact, Protestant religious works were too intellectual and arid for the laity. By stripping away what they saw as superstition, something spiritually appealing and comforting was lost; there was a genuine spiritual dimension involved in certain of the traditional Catholic practices. The antagonistic dialogue which helped to define the doctrine and system of beliefs of both Churches is not a process that necessarily led to satisfying the needs of the people.

Although Benoist ensured the continuation of trends from earlier in the century, he quite clearly endorsed the presentational changes of the French Books of Hours which had begun to appear in the two decades before he published his own edition. This was no doubt partly because it aided the comprehension of the text, which seems to have been one of his main objectives for this and for his editions of other works; however, it was perhaps also because he appreciated the need for revisions to the text to suit the times, something which he appears to have acknowledged was necessary for Catholic versions of Scriptural translations. Meanwhile, many Latin Hours remained the same. Benoist's Hours sold, whilst the others declined in popularity. The lesson, which Benoist appears to have understood, is clear: progress is necessary for the survival of even the most traditional of texts or of institutions.

APPENDIX 1

Later Latin-French and French Books of Hours (including Offices of the Virgin Mary)

- If possible from the information provided in catalogues and bibliographies, I indicate Use, place of publication, publisher, year of publication, and whether the edition provides a bilingual Latin-French or French-only translation.
- I include only editions which I can say are in the vernacular with a reasonable degree of certainty; the list will undoubtedly grow as more research is completed in this area.
- If editions are not listed in the bibliographies of Paul Lacombe,¹ Léon Voet² or Émile Pasquier,³ the details of the library and shelf-mark of at least one copy of the work are supplied.
- Works that I have consulted are asterisked (*); see my bibliography for further details of the copy.
- Where photographic reproductions are provided in Karen Bowen's work on Christopher Plantin,⁴ the edition is marked with two asterisks (**).

¹ Lacombe, *Livres d'Heures imprimés*.

² Voet, *The Plantin Press*.

³ Pasquier, *Un curé de Paris*.

⁴ Bowen, *Christopher Plantin's Books of Hours*.

Part A: Books of Hours to 1569 excluding those published by Christopher Plantin

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: Godard, 1545), Latin-French, (Universitätsbibliothek Augsburg 02/XIII.10.8.57)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: L'Angelié, 1547), Latin-French, (Katholische Propsteigemeinde St. Viktor, Stiftsbibliothek, Xanten, 5515)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: Ruelle, 1547), Latin-French, (Staats- und Stadtbibliothek Augsburg Th B IV 11 Beibd.)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: [n.pub.], 1547), Latin-French, (Staats- und Stadtbibliothek Augsburg Th Lt K 236)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Lyons: M. Bonhomme pour G. Roville, 1549), Latin-French, (Lacombe 509-10)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: E. Mesvière pour M. Boursette Regnault, 1550), Latin-French, (Harvard College Library)⁵

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Lyons: G. Roville, 1551), Latin-French, (Michigan University RELICS 5130; also perhaps Brussels Bibliothèque Royale LP5965?)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: Veuve J. de Brie, 1553), Latin-French, (Cambridge University Library, Adams 1048)⁶

⁵ This is listed as the 33rd entry of the 'Horae' section in Ruth Mortimer, under the supervision of Philip Hofer and William A. Jackson, *Harvard College Library, Department of Printing and Graphic Arts Catalogue of Books and Manuscripts: French Sixteenth Century Books*, 2 vols (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1964).

*[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: M. Boursette, 1554), Latin-French, (BL C.109.e.45)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] ([Paris]: [n.pub.], [c.1554]), Latin-French, (Lacombe 445)

*[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: J. Amazeur pour G. Merlin, 1555 [colophon 1556]), Latin-French, (Bod Douce BB 14(1))

*[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Lyons: M. Bonhomme, 1558), Latin-French, (Lacombe 514)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: C. L'Angelier, [c.1558]), Latin-French, (Lacombe 450)

⁶ See H. M. Adams, *Catalogue of Books Printed on the Continent of Europe, 1501-1600*, in *Cambridge Libraries*, 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), I, 651.

Part B: Books of Hours published by Christopher Plantin

- Further information can be found in the work of either Voet or Bowen.
- All known editions appear to have been printed in Antwerp.
- I indicate editions of which no copy is known. The relative merits of the case for the existence of each edition can be found in Bowen.⁷

Books of Hours

**[Hours for the Use of Rome] (1557), French, (Voet 1374)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (1558), French, (Voet 1375) **[no copy known]**
(perhaps Emory University BX2080 .A2 1558 SEYDEL?)

*[Hours for the Use of Rome] (1565), Latin-French, (Voet 1370)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (1566), Latin-French, (Voet 1371)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (1568), Latin-French, (Voet 1372)

[Hours] (1568), Latin-French, (Voet/Bowen 1372bis) **[no copy known]**

[Hours] (1568?), Latin-French, (Voet/Bowen 1372ter) **[no copy known]**

**[Hours for the Use of Rome] (1570), Latin-French, (Voet 1373)

⁷ See Bowen, pp. 231, 248-49.

Office of the Virgin Mary

[Office of the Virgin Mary] (1575), Latin-French, (Voet/Bowen 1777ter) [**no copy known**]

Part C: Books of Hours attributed to Benoist⁸

- If an edition is found in Pasquier, it is indicated at the end of the entry.⁹

Benoist's Hours were clearly popular; as can be seen from the dates, several different editions are sometimes published within a calendar year and a wide variety of publishers and places of publication are also involved (Paris, Lyons, Rouen, Douay and Troyes). The work was put into a slightly different form after Benoist's death and renamed the *Office de la Vierge Marie*. In many cases, only a single copy of a particular edition exists and bibliographical research is complicated by their wide geographic dispersion; identification of further editions is also frustrated by the minimal details often supplied in catalogues. It is quite likely that yet more editions than the ones already identified were issued.

Books of Hours

*[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: J. le Blanc pour J. Kerver, 1569), French, (PQ145)

*[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: J. le Blanc pour J. Kerver, 1569), Latin-French, (PH 71.27 a8)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: J. de Heuqueville, 1579), Latin-French, (PQ145)

*[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: G. Buon, 1580), Latin-French, (PQ145)

[Hours] (Paris: M. Locqueneulx, 1582), (PQ145)

⁸ These Hours contain Benoist's name in the title; see my bibliography for examples.

⁹ For Pasquier's comment surrounding the *Heures*, see Pasquier, pp. 161-62.

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: G. de la Noue, 1585), French, (Lacombe 481)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: [n.pub.], 1596), Latin-French, (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München Res./Res. Liturg. 606)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Douay: J. Bogard, 1597), Latin-French, (Cleveland Public Library (John G. White Coll.) 260.244 B44h)

[Hours] (Paris: L. Delas, 1597), (PQ145)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Rouen: [n.pub.], [c.1600]), Latin-French, (Universitätsbibliothek Tübingen Gi 2044)

[Hours] (Paris: Veuve G. de la Noue, 1602), (PQ145)

[Hours] (Lyons: T. Ancelin, 1603), (PQ145)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: J. Gesslin, 1603), Latin-French, (BM Troyes 12.imp.tr.518(1-4), Fonds ancien)

[Hours] (Rouen: D. Cousturier, [n.d.]), (PQ145)

[Hours for the Use of Paris] (Paris: Foucault, 1610), (BM Amiens TH 1613 A, Théologie)

*[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Rouen: A. Cousturier, [1611?]), Latin-French, (BL 843.g.9.(1))

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: Foucalt, 1614), Latin-French (Staats- und Stadtbibliothek Augsburg Th Lt K 237)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: E. Perrin, 1616), Latin-French, (Ohio University BX2080. A2 1616x)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: Veuve C. de Monstr'oeil, 1619), French, (Harvard University Library Typ 615.19.262)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: G. Loyson, 1619), (BM Troyes mit c.7.125/159, Mitantier)

[Hours] (Paris: [n.pub.], 1619), (PQ145)

*[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: J. le Bègue, [1619?]), French, (Bowes 090/Ho (calendar only))

[Hours] (Paris: Foucalt, 1621), (PQ145)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: R. Boutonné, 1623), French, (BM Lyon Rés B 510026, CGA)

[Hours] (Paris: Le Faucheur, 1623), (PQ145)

[Hours] (Paris: J. Meiat, 1623), (PQ145)

[Hours] (Paris: R. Boutonné, 1624), (PQ145)

[Hours] ([n.p.]: [n.pub.], 1625), (Lacombe, p. LXVI)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: M. Denys, 1628), Latin-French, (BM Troyes mit.c.6.53/88, Mitantier)

[Hours] (Paris: Gaultier, 1630), (PQ145)

[Hours] (Paris: G. le Bé, 1631), French, (BM Lyon Rés B 509898, CGA)

*[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: A. Courbé, 1634), Latin-French, (BnF B. 6037)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: G. Loyson, 1634), Latin-French, (BM Troyes mit.c.6.54/89, Mitantier)

Offices of the Virgin Mary

[Office of the Virgin Mary] (Paris: J. le Bègue, [c.1614]), (PQ146)

*[Office of the Virgin Mary] (Paris: D. Le Clerc, 1615), French, (BL 1478.aa.36)

[Office of the Virgin Mary] (Troyes: P. de Villiers, 1618), (PQ146)

[Office of the Virgin Mary] (Paris: M. Colombel, 1619), (PQ146)

[Office of the Virgin Mary] (Paris: Colombel, 1629), (BM Avignon Rés. 229, Réserve)

[Office of the Virgin Mary] (Paris: S. Huré, [1629]), (PQ146)

[Office of the Virgin Mary] (Paris: M. Ballagny, 1646), (PQ146)

Part D: Books of Hours (including Offices of the Virgin)¹⁰ 1570-1620¹¹ not attributed to Benoist¹²

******[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: N. du Chemin, 1570), Latin-French, (Museum Plantin-Moretus (Antwerp) R 43.13)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Rouen: N. Pasie, 1571), Latin-French, (Lincoln Cathedral L1373)¹³

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: L. Cavellat, 1579), Latin-French, (Lacombe 469)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: L'Angelier, 1584), Latin-French, (Harvard College Library)¹⁴

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Liège: P. de Heer, [15[8]5?]), French, (Bibliothèque publique centrale de la Ville (Liège) B 146)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Lyons: J. Pillehotte, 1594), Latin-French, (BM Lyon Rés B 508631, CGA)

¹⁰ It is particularly difficult to ascertain the language of Offices of the Virgin; the two which appear in this list that I have consulted do not indicate that they include French translations in their titles; moreover, the 1610 edition has a Latin title. It is therefore possible that more vernacular Offices exist, particularly after 1600 (when Lacombe's work ends); however, to judge from the holdings of the British Library and of the Bodleian, this number cannot be high.

¹¹ The end date to Appendix 1, Part D is 1620 because it is the last date of my most rigorous searches. However, judging from the information provided in the catalogues that I have consulted, it seems that Hours attributed to Benoist (although perhaps re-edited by someone else) continued to dominate in the 1620s and 1630s.

¹² As full bibliographical details are not always given in catalogues, it is possible that some works in this list are in fact Benoist's.

¹³ See *The Cathedral Libraries Catalogue*, ed. by David J. Shaw and others, 2 vols (London: British Library, [c.1984-98]).

¹⁴ Mortimer, 'Horae', 38.

*[Office of the Virgin Mary] (Paris: J. Mettayer, J. Houzé, et G. Drobet, 1595).
Latin-French, (Bod Douce BB 217(1))

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Metz: A. Faber, 1599), Latin-French, (Lacombe
 545)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Troyes: Oudot, 1600), Latin-French,
 (Universitätsbibliothek München 8 Liturg. 255 1)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Rouen: Costé, [c.1608]), Latin-French,
 (Universitätsbibliothek Eichstätt 04/1 BO L 32)

*[Office of the Virgin Mary] (Paris: J. Houzé, 1610), Latin-French, (Bod Douce
 BB 63)

APPENDIX 2

Psalm 6 (the first Penitential Psalm) in prose translations of French Books of Hours and selected French Bibles

- Below, I provide the first six verses of Psalm 6 from the relevant works.
- I underline the differences between the text of Benoist-Kerver 1569(1) (the Latin-French edition) and that of earlier and later editions of the same era; an asterisk (*) denotes a missing word or phrase. I take Benoist's bilingual 1569 Hours as the base text in order to show which earlier text it derived from and to track the impact on subsequent editions.

Part A: Jean de Brie and the *Bible historiale*

<p>De Brie [1520?], fol. J6^r</p> <p>[...] Sire ne me argue point en ta fureur: et ne me corrige point en ton ire. [...] Sire ayes mercy de moy: car je suis malade: garis moy et me donne sante sire: car tous mes os sont conturbez. [...] Et mon ame est fort troublee: mais sire jusques a quand? [...] Convertis toy sire, et delivre mon ame: saulve moy pour ta misericorde.¹⁵ [...] Car il n'y a la mort qui soit remembrable de toy lequel a doncques se confessera a toy en enfer? [sic]</p>	<p><i>Bible historiale</i> (C17, <u>BH[c.1510]ver</u>), fol. qq5^r</p> <p>Seigneur dieu ne me argue pas en ta fureur, et ne me corrige pas en ton ire. Seigneur dieu ayez mercy de moy. Car je suis malade, gueris moy et me donne sante, car tous mes os sont conturbez et afoibliz. Et mon ame est tresfort troublee, mais sire dieu jusques a quant? Seigneur dieu convertis toy, et delivre mon ame, sauve moy pour ta misericorde. Car il n'y a homme quant vient la mort qui ait remembrance de toy, doncques qui se pourra confesser a toy en enfer?</p>
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¹⁵ The Seven Penitential Psalms sometimes appear in French in Latin Hours; if we are to judge by the [1511?] Vérard Hours in Durham Cathedral's Chapter Library (H.IIB.50) and the translation identical to this in the [1490?] Vérard Hours held in the British Library (IB. 41113), the translation in Latin Hours is related, but not identical.

Part B: French Books of Hours from the 1550s not published by Plantin

<p><u>Boursette 1554, fol. K7^v</u></p> <p>O <u>Eternel</u>, ne me reprens point en ton ire: et ne me chastie point en ta fureur.</p> <p>O <u>Eternel</u> aye mercy de moy, car je suis malade: gueris moy <u>Eternel</u>, car mes os sont estonnez.</p> <p>Et est mon ame grandement estonnee: mais toy Eternel, jusques à quand <u>poursuyvras tu</u>?</p> <p>O <u>Eternel</u> revire toy, delivre mon ame: et me sauve par ta grace.</p> <p>Car il n'est faicte nulle mention de toy entre les mortz: qui te louera <u>au sepulchre</u>?</p>	<p><u>Merlin 1555, fol. 103^r</u></p> <p>O Seigneur * ne me reprens point en ton ire: et ne me chastie point en ta fureur.</p> <p>O Seigneur * ayez mercy de moy, car je suis malade: gueris moy seigneur car mes oz sont estonnez.</p> <p>Et est mon ame grandement estonnée: mais <u>ô</u> toy seigneur, jusques à quand <u>poursuyvras tu</u>?</p> <p>O Seigneur revire toy, delivre mon ame: et <u>la</u> saulve par ta grace.</p> <p>Car il n'est faict nulle mention de toy entre les mortz: qui te louera <u>au sepulchre</u>?</p>	<p><u>Bonhomme 1558, fol. N1^v</u></p> <p>O <u>Eternel</u>, ne me reprens point en ton ire: et ne me chastie point en ta fureur.</p> <p>O <u>Eternel</u> aye mercy de moy, car je suis malade gueris moy <u>eternel</u>, car mes os sont estonnez.</p> <p>Et est mon ame grandement estonnée: mais toy <u>eternel</u>, jusques à quand <u>poursuyvras tu</u>?</p> <p>O <u>Eternel</u> revire toy, delivre mon ame: et me sauve par ta grace.</p> <p>Car il n'est faicte nulle mention de toy entre les mortz qui te louera <u>au sepulchre</u>?</p>
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Part C: French Books of Hours published by Plantin

<p>Plantin 1557,¹⁶ fol. 96^r</p> <p>O Seigneur * ne me reprens point en ton ire: et ne me chastie point en ta fureur.</p> <p>O seigneur * ayes mercy de moy, car je suis malade: gueris moy seigneur car mes oz sont estonnez.</p> <p>Et est mon ame grandement estonnée: mais <u>ô</u> toy seigneur, jusques à quand <u>poursuyvras tu?</u></p> <p>O seigneur revire toy, * delivre mon ame: et <u>la</u> sauve par ta grace.</p> <p>Car il n'est faict nulle mention de [...]</p>	<p>Plantin 1565, p. 151</p> <p>O Seigneur *, ne me reprens point en ton ire, et ne me chastie point en ta fureur.</p> <p>O Seigneur * ayes mercy de moy, car je suis malade: guaris moy Seigneur, car mes os sont estonnez.</p> <p>Et est mon ame grandement estonnée, mais toy <u>ô</u> Seigneur, jusques à quand <u>poursuyvras tu?</u></p> <p>O Seigneur revire toy, * delivre mon ame, et me sauve par ta grace.</p> <p>Car il n'est fait nulle mention de toy entre les morts: qui te louera <u>au sepulchre?</u></p>	<p>Plantin 1570,¹⁷ p. 181</p> <p>* Seigneur *, ne me reprens point en <u>ta fureur: et ne me chastie point en ton ire.</u></p> <p>* Seigneur, * aye mercy de moy, car je suis malade: gueris moy, Seigneur, car mes os sont estonnez.</p> <p>Et mon ame est grandement <u>troublée: mais ô</u> toy Seigneur, jusques a quand?</p> <p>Seigneur, <u>retourne</u> toy, et delivre mon ame: sauve <u>moy</u> pour ta <u>misericorde.</u></p> <p>Car <u>en la mort il n'y a aucun qui ait souvenance de toy: et qui confessera tes louenges en enfer?</u></p>
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¹⁶ See Bowen, fig. 22.

¹⁷ See Bowen, fig. 54; Plantin seems to have used Benoist's Bible for this translation (see below).

Part D: Benoist’s 1569 Books of Hours

<p><u>Benoist-Kerver 1569(1), fols 98^v-99^r</u></p> <p>O Seigneur Dieu, ne me reprens point en ton ire: et ne me chastie point en ta fureur.</p> <p>O Seigneur Dieu ayes mercy de moy, car je suis malade: guaris moy Seigneur, car mes os sont estonnez.</p> <p>Et est mon ame grandement estonnee: mais toy Seigneur, jusques à quand?</p> <p>O Seigneur revire toy, et delivre mon ame: et me sauve par ta grace.</p> <p>Car il n'est faicte nulle mention de toy entre les morts: qui te louera en l'enfer?</p>	<p><u>Benoist-Kerver 1569(2), fols 61^r-^v</u></p> <p>O Seigneur Dieu, ne me reprens point en ton ire: et ne me chastie point en ta fureur.</p> <p>O Seigneur Dieu aye mercy de moy car je suis malade: gueris moy Seigneur, car mes oz sont estonnez.</p> <p>Et est mon ame grandement estonnée: mais toy Seigneur, jusques à quand?</p> <p>O Seigneur revire toy, delivre mon ame: et me sauve par ta grace.</p> <p>Car il n'est faite * mention de toy entre les morts: qui te louëra en l'enfer?</p>
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Part E: Later ‘Benoist’ Hours

- It should be remembered that Benoist died in 1608.
- Subsequent Hours (Benoist’s 1580 and [1611] editions and the 1595 and 1610 editions) appear to be influenced by what has preceded, although God is addressed as ‘vous’ instead of ‘tu’.¹⁸
- The compiler of the 1615 ‘Benoist’ Hours uses a different Scriptural translation for the Psalter and reinstates ‘tu’. We find an explanation for these changes at the end of the volume:

En ceste Edition on a suivy la correction de feu Me René Benoist, hormis qu’en beaucoup d’endroits il a esté plus poly et rendu François, et le sens plus intelligible. **Quant aux Psalmes, ils sont tous de la version de feu Mr l’Archevesque de Bourges.** Les Cantiques *Benedictus*, et *Magnificat*, et les autres corrigez et supleez, ou de la version en vers des meilleurs Poëtes de ce siecle.¹⁹

- Psalm headings also begin to appear; these, as can be seen, are recycled.

¹⁸ As ‘tu’ is used in the Louvain Bible of 1550 (C145, B1550gra-ber-wae) and the 1578 Plantin Bible (C439, B1578pla) and Guy Bedouelle and Bernard Roussel suggest that both Protestants and Catholics used ‘tu’, this remains to be explained (*Le Temps des Réformes et la Bible*, ed. by Bedouelle and Roussel, p. 453); Benoist made the same change to his 1579 translation of Tobit (see Chapter 3).

¹⁹ Benoist-Le Clerc 1615, p. 394^v; my highlighting. The title indicates the change of translators; it is difficult to tell whether all subsequent versions used this translation or not because of the shortened titles used in library catalogues. According to the title of the 1634 edition held in the BnF, it uses the same version as the 1615 *Office*.

<p>Benoist-Buon 1580, fols 100^{r-v}</p> <p>De la confession des pechez et detestation d'iceux.</p> <p>O Seigneur Dieu, ne me reprenez point en vostre <u>fureur</u>, et ne me chastiez point en vostre <u>ire</u>.</p> <p>O Seigneur Dieu ayez mercy de moy, car je suis malade: guarissez moy Seigneur, car mes os sont estonnez.</p> <p>Et est mon ame grandement estonnee, mais vous Seigneur, jusques à quand?</p> <p>O Seigneur revirez vous, et delivrez mon ame: et me sauvez par vostre grace.</p> <p>Car il n'est fait nulle mention de vous entre les morts: qui vous louera en l'enfer?</p>	<p>Benoist-Cousturier [1611], fols K3^{r-v}</p> <p>De la confession des pechez, et detestation d'iceux.</p> <p>* Seigneur * ne me reprenez point en vostre <u>fureur</u>, et ne me chastiez point en vostre <u>ire</u>.</p> <p>O Seigneur Dieu ayez mercy de moy, car je suis malade: guerissez moy Seigneur, car mes os sont estonnez.</p> <p>Et est mon ame grandement estonnée, mais vous Seigneur, jusques à quand?</p> <p>O Seigneur <u>retournez</u> vous et delivrez mon ame: et me sauvez par vostre grace.</p> <p>Car il n'est fait nulle mention de vous entre les morts: qui vous loüera en l'enfer?</p>	<p>Benoist-Le Clerc 1615, fols 185^{r-v}</p> <p>Psalme de penitence pour appaiser l'ire de Dieu, obtenir remission de son peché, et guarison de griefve maladie, avec assurance de sa vie, contre l'expectation de ses ennemis. [...]</p> <p>Seigneur ne me reprens * en ta <u>fureur</u>, et ne me <u>corrige</u> * en ton <u>courroux</u>.</p> <p>* Seigneur * aye mercy de moy, car je suis malade: gueris moy, Seigneur, car mes os sont <u>esbranlez</u>.</p> <p>* Mon ame aussi, est <u>fort troublee</u>: mais <u>jusques à quand</u> Seigneur, me delaisseras-tu?</p> <p>* Seigneur, <u>retourne</u> toi <u>vers moy</u>, * delivre mon ame, * sauve <u>moy</u> par ta <u>misericorde</u>.</p> <p>Car <u>entre les morts ne sera faicte aucune mention de toy: et aux enfers, qui annoncera ta gloire?</u></p>
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Part F: French versions after 1569 not attributed to Benoist

<p><u>Mettayer-Houzé-Drobet 1595, fols 113^{r-v}</u></p> <p>De la confession des pechez, et detestation d'iceux, avec une ferme esperance en la bonté et misericorde de Dieu, par Jesus christ nostre mediateur, redempteur et reconciliateur.</p> <p>O Seigneur Dieu, ne me reprenez point en vostre <u>fureur</u>, et ne me chastiez point en vostre <u>ire</u>.</p> <p>O Seigneur Dieu, ayez <u>pitié</u> de moy, car je suis malade: guarissez moy, Seigneur, car mes os sont estonnez.</p> <p>Et mon ame <u>est</u> grandement estonnee: mais vous Seigneur, jusques à quand <u>seray-je en telle peine</u>?</p> <p>O Seigneur revirés vous et delivrez mon ame: et me sauvez par vostre grace <u>et misericorde</u>.</p> <p>Car il n'est faict nulle mention de vous entre les morts: <u>et</u> qui vous louera en l'enfer?</p>	<p><u>Houzé 1610, fols 114^{r-v}</u></p> <p>De la confession des pechez, et detestation d'iceux.</p> <p>* Seigneur Dieu, ne me reprenés point en vostre <u>fureur</u>, et ne me chastiés point en vostre <u>ire</u>.</p> <p>O Seigneur Dieu aiez mercy de moy, car je suis malade: guarissez moy Seigneur, car mes os sont estonnez.</p> <p>Et est mon ame grandement estonnee, mais vous Seigneur jusques à quand?</p> <p>O Seigneur revirez vous, <u>et</u> delivrez mon ame: et me sauvez par vostre grace.</p> <p>Car il n'est fait nulle mention de vous entre les morts: qui vous louera en l'enfer?</p>
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NB: The late seventeenth-century Hours consulted have been rewritten.²⁰

²⁰ I consulted the *Office de l'Eglise en latin et en françois [...]* (Paris: Le Petit, 1678). This translation dates from 1650 according to its prefatory material and is no doubt the Port-Royal Hours (see the concluding section of Chapter 4).

Part G: Psalm 6 in selected Bibles

<p>C128, <u>B1546gir</u> (Protestant (Calvin's), Geneva), fol. 194^r</p> <p>Seigneur ne me reprens point en ton ire, et ne me chastie point en ta fureur.</p> <p>Seigneur aye mercy de moy: car je suis malade: guaray moy Seigneur, car mes os sont estonnez.</p> <p>Et est mon ame grandement troublée: mais toy Seigneur, jusque à quand?</p> <p>Seigneur retourne toy, delivre mon ame et me sauve par ta grace.</p> <p>Car il n'est fait nulle mention de toy en la mort: qui te louëra au sepulcre?</p>	<p>C366, <u>B1566hon</u> (Protestant, Lyons),²¹ fol. 348^v</p> <p>2 Seigneur, ne me repren point en ton ire, et ne me chastie point en ta fureur.</p> <p>3 Seigneur, aye merci de moy: car c'est fait de moy: guaray moy, Seigneur, car mes os sont estonnez.</p> <p>4 Mon ame aussi est grandement troublee: mais toy Seigneur, jusques à quand <i>m'affligeras-tu</i>?</p> <p>5 Seigneur retourne toy, et delivre mon ame, et me sauve pour l'amour de ta bonté.</p> <p>6 Car il n'est <i>fait</i> nulle mention de toy en la mort: qui est-ce qui te louëra au sepulchre?</p>	<p>C399, <u>B1568nyv</u> (Catholic (Benoist's), Paris), fol. 3^v</p> <p>2 Seigneur, ne me reprens point en ta fureur: et ne me chastie point en ton ire.</p> <p>3 Seigneur, aye mercy de moy, car je suis malade: gueris moy, seigneur, car mes os sont estonnez.</p> <p>4 Et mon ame est grandement troublée: mais ô toy seigneur, jusques à quand?</p> <p>5 Seigneur, retourne toy, et delivre mon ame: sauve moy pour ta misericorde.</p> <p>6 Car en la mort il n'y a aucun qui ait souvenance de toy: et qui confessera tes louenges en enfer?</p>
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²¹ I provide this translation as an example of a Protestant Bible from around the time of Benoist's Hours and because it is the Bible that in presentational terms bears a strong resemblance to Benoist's 1566 Bible (see Chapter 3).

APPENDIX 3

Translations of John 1. 1-6 in Benoist’s 1569 Books of Hours

<p><u>Benoist-Kerver 1569(1), fols 1^v-2^r</u></p> <p>Au commencement et devant toutes creatures estoit le verbe, et le verbe estoit avec Dieu, et Dieu estoit le verbe. Et ce verbe estoit avec Dieu des le commencement. Toutes choses ont esté faictes par iceluy, et sans iceluy rien n’a esté faict de ce qui est faict. Et iceluy estoit la vie: et la vie estoit la lumiere des hommes: et la lumiere luist és tenebres, mais les tenebres ne l’ont pas comprinse. Un homme fut envoyé de Dieu qui estoit nommé Jean. [...]</p>	<p><u>Benoist-Kerver 1569(2), fol. B3^v</u></p> <p>Au commencement estoit la parolle, et la parolle estoit avec Dieu, et Dieu estoit la parole. Icelle estoit avec Dieu dés le commencement. Toutes choses sont faictes par icelle et sans icelle rien n’a esté faict de ce qui est fait. Et icelle estoit la vie: et la vie estoit la lumiere des hommes, et la lumiere luit aux tenebres: mais les tenebres ne l’ont point comprinse. Un homme fut envoyé de Dieu, qui estoit nommé Jean. [...]</p>
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APPENDIX 4

French quatrains in Benoist's Books of Hours after 1569

I compared the quatrains at the beginning of the Hours of the Virgin, the Penitential Psalms and the Office of the Dead. The results show that those who compiled Benoist's Hours after 1569 continued to borrow rhymes from earlier Hours:

- Before Matins of the Hours of the Virgin in Benoist-Buon 1580 on fol. 1^r we find:

Nature humaine estant perie
Pour ceste grande playe estancher,
Dieu envoya son fils trescher,
Ce qu'annonça l'Ange à Marie.

This appeared in Merlin 1555 (fol. 33^r) and later appears in the posthumous Benoist Hours Benoist-Cousturier [1611] (fol A1^r).

- By comparing the quatrains positioned at the beginning of the Penitential Psalms, we see the same rhymes in Merlin 1555 (fol. 102^v) and Benoist-Buon 1580 (fol. 99^v).
- The rhyme heading the Office of the Dead appears in Merlin 1555 (fol. 115^r) and Benoist-Buon 1580 (fol. 121^v).
- In the latter two cases, Benoist-Cousturier [1611] has different rhymes (see fols K2^v and M2^r).

APPENDIX 5

The post-Tridentine reform of the Book of Hours: extracts from the papal bull

The following text has been transcribed from part of the prefatory material to Foucault's 1609 Office of the Virgin Mary.²² The text is arranged in the order in which it appears, but divided into parts (my numbering) for ease of reference in my discussion in Chapter 4; I have omitted part of the text between Parts F and G.

Part A

[...]

Or ayant, avec l'ayde de Dieu, pour l'exécution de ce qui a esté ordonné par le saint Concile de Trente, fait mettre en lumiere un Catechisme pour l'instruction du peuple, reformé le Breviaire, pour prier Dieu, et luy rendre loüanges et graces, et le Messel restitué à l'ancienne forme des saints Peres, afin que les Prestres sceussent quelles Oraisons ils doivent dire, quelles coustumes et ceremonies il faut observer en la celebration des messes: ayans davantage ordonné qu'on apportast mesme soing et diligence à corriger et emender l'Office de la glorieuse Vierge Marie, la recitation duquel, comme il est propre et particulier aux apprentifs et nouveaux fideles de Jesus-Christ,²³ ainsi une bonne partie d'iceluy a esté remplie de choses superflues (non sans le scandale des personnes devotes) qui peuvent ayement induire les plus rudes et infirmes, à des superstitions diverses: et ce par l'avarice de quelques Imprimeurs, qui pour plus facilement attirer les fideles à achepter les livres de l'office susdit par eux imprimez, ont, sous couleur de pieté et spirituelle consolation des ames, adjousté beaucoup de choses du leur: et ayans jà à la priere des hommes sçavans, et diligence des gens de bien et devots que nous avons commis à cet affaire, procedé à l'uniformité et au reglement du Breviaire susdit, et à la correction de l'office de la susdite Vierge Marie mere de Dieu, là où ce qui estoit dehors, et incertain, a esté rongné, et le tout approuvé par nous, ayant commandé qu'il fust imprimé à Rome, et

²² For the entire text, see [Office of the Virgin Mary] (Paris: Foucault, 1609), fols A2^r-A7^v.

²³ Rome indicates here the Book of Hours' use for children and new converts. Children had traditionally been associated with using Hours and learning to read from them (see, for instance, Lacombe, pp. LXVI-LXVII); the large print of several editions and ABC which often heads the 'Instruction pour le Chrestien' are indicative of this, and, of course, in England, primers and Hours are frequently linked. The suggestion that new converts should use the Hours is not one that I have seen explored elsewhere.

de la divulgué par la Chrestienté: afin que la consolation spirituelle que nous desirons, se multiplie és ames de fideles.²⁴

Part B

De nostre mouvement, etc. et certaine science, et par la plenitude de la puissance Apostolique, nous annullons et abolissons tous Offices quelconques composez, soit en langage Italien, soit en quelque autre langage que ce puisse estre: et mesme l'Office imprimé à Venise, l'année prochainement derniere M.D.LXX. chez les Juntas, intitulé (quoy que faussement) l'Office de la Vierge Marie, reformé par le Concile de Trente, sous Pie cinquiesme souverain Pontife: en somme tous et chacuns autres tels Offices (voire mesme en langue Latine) divulguez en quelque façon et maniere que ce soit, sous le nom et titre du Jardin de l'ame, ou Abbrege du Thresor spirituel: desquelles par ces presentes nous abrogeons l'usage, qui n'est selon l'approbation, coustume et institution Apostolique (demeurant toutefois en son entier ce qui est de l'antiquité, comme il sera dit cy apres) et le deffendons à tous fideles de Jesus-Christ, Seculiers ou Ecclesiastiques, de quelque sexe que ce soit: voire mesme à tous Religieux de quelque Ordre regulier, ou compagnie que ce soit, qui de droit, coustume, usage, statut, institutions, et constitutions, mesmes d'iceux Ordres, societiez et reigle, sont tenus de reciter journellement l'Office de la Vierge Marie: Et à iceux, en vertu de la sainte obeyssance qu'ils ont juree, nous interdisons tout autre usage et Office, fors celui de la benoiste Vierge Marie, qui par nostre commandement a esté corrigé: lequel seul (quelque pretexte qu'on puisse apporter) nous voulons estre recité, leu, et tenu selon qu'il est redigé en l'Imprimerie du peuple Romain, dressee pour fidelement et sans corruption imprimer les livres sacrez en nostre bonne ville.²⁵

Part C

Et tout autre usage leur estant dénié (afin que tous ainsi astraits et obligez, il soit par eux recité en mesme maniere, et que jamais d'entre eux ne procede aucune varieté, pour la recitation d'icelle) nous ordonnons estre leu, recité et observé cet Office nostre, et formule de prier et psalmodier susdite, par toute la Chrestienté, és maisons privees, Eglises, Monasteres, Couvents, Chapelles, Oratoires, Ordres, Societez, Milices, et lieux, voire exempts, tant d'hommes que de femmes, esquels se doit reciter (comme a esté dit) en quelque maniere que ce soit, cet Office de la benoiste Vierge Marie: excepté toutefois les Offices, qui dés leur premiere institution ont esté expressement approuvez du Siege Apostolique (pourveu qu'ils ne soient point redigez en langue vulgaire) ou desquels il apparaitra certain usage avoir esté continuellement observé par longue coustume, ou par leur institution mesme, avant deux cens ans passez és Eglises, Monasteres, Maisons, et lieux des Ecclesiastiques de l'un et de l'autre sexe: lesquels astraits et obligez comme dessus, comme nous ne leur osons point l'ancienne mode de dire et chanter leur Office (moyennant que comme a esté dit ce ne soit point en langue vulgaire) ainsi leur permettons nous de dire et chanter au choeur cet Office par nous dressé, que maintenant nous publions,

²⁴ Fols A2^r- A3^r.

²⁵ Fols A3^r-v. Other publishing houses were granted permission to print this work at a later point, for instance, Plantin's (see Chapter 4).

si d'aventure il leur est plus agreable, pourveu que l'Evesque, ou Prelat, et tout le Chapitre y consente.²⁶

Part D

Et pour le regard de ceux qui ne sont obligez à dire le service susdit de la Vierge Marie, nous leur interdisons totalement l'usage du susdit Office en langue vulgaire, voire mesme des Oraisons composées semblablement en langue vulgaire, meslées parmy les autres Offices Latins: Les exhortans neantmoins en nostre seigneur (pour ne point estré embrouillez en des vaines erreurs de superstition, desquelles on a trouvé estre remplis tous tels Offices, quoy que composez en langue Latine) de s'abstenir de la lecture et usage d'autres Office de la Vierge Marie, que de celuy nostre: et fermement croire qu'en iceux autres Offices, on a forgé beaucoup d'Oraisons à plaisir souz le nom faux et aposté des Saints, desquelles (comme des Indulgences et remission des pechez, qui par icelles sont donnez à ceux qui les disent) il n'apparoist rien de certain en l'Eglise.²⁷

Part E

Pour ceste cause se conformans à la recitation de cet Office, à la façon et maniere ainsi par nous ordonnée en l'Eglise universelle, ils ne lisent, ou recitent d'oresnavant aucun autre Office de la Vierge Marie, que le nostre. Et afin d'abolir totalement les abus de ces Offices en langage vulgaire, nous commandons à tous Seculiers, ou Ecclesiastiques, encores qu'ils ne soient sujets à reciter l'Office susdict, de mettre incontinent et sans delay, és mains des Inquisiteurs de la Foy, toutes telles choses, sans aucune esperance de recouvrement: et quant aux autres qui sont en Latin, et meslez parmy d'autres livres, nous leurs enjoignons de les corriger et repurger cy apres, quand ils auront esté veuz et mieux ordonnez par les Inquisiteurs: proposans en nous mesmes, et declarans, qu'à cet Office n'aguères mis en lumiere par nostre auctorité, jamais, par qui, de quelque qualité, et souz quelque pretexte que ce soit, ne sera rien adjousté, diminué, ou changé: et que tous ceux qui sont tenuz de dire, reciter et chanter iceluy Office de la Vierge Marie, par l'ordonnance de celuy nostre Office Romain, ils y sont totalement obligez, et n'y a aucun qui puisse satisfaire à sa charge sinon souz ceste regle et condition.²⁸

Part F

Et afin que la volonté et affection des fidelles, soit davantage incitée à la lecture et usage salulaire de cet Office de la Vierge Marie dressé par nostre commandement, et des Oraisons y inserees, sous la confiance que nous avons en la misericorde de Dieu, et des

²⁶ Fols A3^v-A4^r.

²⁷ Fol. A4^r.

²⁸ Fols A4^r-^v.

bien-heureux Apostres saint Pierre, et saint Paul, nous relaxons misericordieusement en Dieu, à tous ceux et celles qui ne sont tenuz au susdict Office, autant de fois qu'ils le diront en la maniere qu'il est par nous reformé, cinquante jours, et à ceux qui diront l'Office des Trespassez, compris avec le mesme Office de la Vierge Marie, autres quarante jours, et de rechef à ceux qui reciteront les sept Pseaumes Penitentiaux, ou Graduels compris aussi au mesme volume que lesdits Offices, autres quarante jours: et finalement à ceux et celles qui reciteront devotement quelque'une des Oraisons comprises au mesme livre autre quinze jours des penitences qui leur sont enjointes. Mais à ceux et celles, qui sont obligez à la recitation journaliere dudit Office, nous leur permettons seulement les Indulgences, qui sont specifiees par nos lettres publiees sur la reformation du nouveau Breviaire [...]²⁹

Part G

Comme aussi à tous Predicateurs de la parole de Dieu, et Confesseurs, nous enjoignons de faire sçavoir en leurs predications, et confessions à tous fideles de l'un et de l'autre sexe, la prohibition et abolition desdites Offices composez en langue vulgaire, lesquels sans delay ils mettront entre les mains des Inquisiteurs de la Foy, et que la lecture et usage d'autre Office que de cestuy nostre, n'est point exempt de superstitions: et en outre de leur signifier la relaxation susmentionnee des penitences qui leur sont enjointes, toutes les fois qu'ils diront et reciteront iceluy Office, et autres choses contenuës en iceluy, specifiees cy dessus: et en somme, de les exhorter par un zèle de pieté, à se conformer d'une prompte devotion à la façon et maniere de prier que nous leur avons dressée par cet Office que nous leur baillons et mettons maintenant en lumiere.³⁰
[...]

²⁹ Fols A4^v-A5^r.

³⁰ Fols A5^v-A6^r.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1 Primary Sources

- a) Works by Benoist, excluding editions of the Bible and Books of Hours
- b) Bibles and New Testaments, including those edited by Benoist
- c) Books of Hours, including those edited by Benoist
- d) Other primary sources

2 Secondary Sources

I provide the details of all works referred to in the thesis that I have consulted; I also list those works that have been used to contextualise my research. I normalise titles in the same manner that I regularise quotations (see the foreword to this thesis), although in addition, I modernise the use of upper and lower case in titles, with the exception of the titles of early-printed French Bibles and New Testaments. Because of the vast number of early-printed Scriptural translations with sometimes almost identical titles, I follow Bettye Chambers in providing the title in a manner which is closer to the way that it appears on the title-page.¹

Editions of complete Bibles, New Testaments and Books of Hours which, according to their title-pages, have been translated or edited by Benoist, are marked with the symbol ‘†’.

Abbreviations

Ars	Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal
BL	British Library
BnF	Bibliothèque nationale de France
Bod	Bodleian Library
Bowes	Bowes Museum, County Durham
C	Chambers
Christ Church	Christ Church College Library, Oxford University
Durham Chapter	The Chapter Library, Durham Cathedral
Durham UL	Durham University Library
Durham Ushaw	Ushaw College Library, Durham University

¹ See Chambers, *Bibliography of French Bibles: Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century French-Language Editions of the Scriptures*, pp. iv-v.

EUL	Edinburgh University Library
GUL	Glasgow University Library
Harris Manchester	Harris Manchester College Library, Oxford University
JR	John Rylands Library, Manchester University
PH	Pusey House Library, Oxford University
PQ	Pasquier

1

Primary Sources

a) Works by Benoist, excluding editions of the Bible and Books of Hours

i) Original works

ii) Works edited, prefaced or translated by Benoist

i) Original works²

Benoist, René, *Claire probation de la necessaire manducation de la substantielle et reale humanité de Jesus Christ, vray Dieu et vray homme, au S. Sacrement de l'autel. Par René Benoist, Angevin, docteur regent en la Faculté de Theologie à Paris* (Paris: N. Chesneau, 1561), (BL 3901.c.43(2))

——— *Brieve response a quelque remonstrance faicte a la roine mere du Roy, par ceux qui se disent persecutez pour la parole de Dieu. 1561. Par René Benoist Angevin, docteur en theologie à Paris. A Messieurs les reverendissimes prelatz de France, assemblez à Poëssy pour la religion* (Paris: G. Guillard et A. Warencore, 1561), (BnF Ld¹⁷⁶. 9)

——— *Certaine resolution et determination des poincts a present controverses touchant la religion chrestienne, faicte par les trois excellentes et celebres Facultez de Theologie à Paris, à Louvain et à Cologne: ensemble un bref et parfaict catechisme: avec quelques autres petits traictez, desquels le nom et ordre se voit en la page suyvente. Par M. René Benoist Angevin, docteur regent en la Faculté de Theologie à Paris* (Paris: G. Chaudière, 1564), (BnF D. 25688)

——— *Epistre à Jean Calvin, dit ministre de Geneve, pour luy remonstrer qu'il repugne à la parole de Dieu, en ce qu'il a escrit des images des chrestiens. Avec un chrestien advertissement à luy mesme, de se reunir à l'Eglise catholique et romaine. Par René Benoist Angevin, docteur en theologie à Paris* (Paris: N. Chesneau, 1564), (BL 3900.aaa.19(1), Ars 8° T 4624(8))

——— *Epistre consolatoire aux habitans de la ville de Nantes, affligez de peste: et apologetique contre ceux lesquelz trop hardiement jugent leur prochain, et sententient les faictz de Dieu: avec un brief advertissement à tous chrestiens, de prevenir l'ire de Dieu par penitence. Par M. René Benoist Angevin, docteur en theologie à Paris* (Paris, N. Chesneau, 1564), (Ars 8° H 13659)

² These are listed in chronological order and then by publisher.

- *Seconde epistre à Jean Calvin, dict ministre de Genève: en laquelle de point en point est refutée, par la parole de Dieu, une vaine et pernicieuse imagination de la participation du corps et sang de Jesus Christ, par un decoulement spirituel: laquelle il a defendue, et proposée en son Institution, qu'il dict, chrestienne. Par René Benoist, Angevin, docteur en theologie, à Paris* (Paris: N. Chesneau, 1564), (BL 3900.aaa.19(2))
- *Traicté catholique des images, et du vray usage d'icelles: extraict de la sainte Esriture et anciens docteurs de l'Eglise. Avec deux petits traictez d'icelles, l'un fait de long temps en grec, par le saint pere et confesseur, Theodore, abbé des Studites, et l'autre prins des oeuvres de saint Damascene. Le tout fait, et mis en françois, par René Benoist Angevin, docteur en theologie, à Paris* (Paris: N. Chesneau, 1564), (Ars 8° T 4,624(6))
- *Traicté des dismes, auquel clairement est monstré, que de tout droict et raison, tous chrestiens sont tenuz de payer les dismes, premices et oblations aux pasteurs de l'Eglise; aussi que iceux pasteurs, par tout droict, sont tenuz et obligez de bailler et ministrer les choses sprituelles et divines à ceux desquels ils reçoivent les dismes, et autres choses temporelles. Par M. René Benoist Angevin, docteur en theologie, à Paris* (Paris: N. Chesneau, 1564), (Ars 8° T 4, 624(3))
- *La Maniere de cognoistre salutairement Jesus Christ, en laquelle ouvertement par l'expresse parole de Dieu le masque des hypocrites, pharisiens, abuseurs, haeretiques, atheistes et libertins et tous autres faulcement soy vendicans la cognoissance de l'eternelle, salutaire et coeleste verité avec le vain et presumptueus espoir qu'ils ont de la vie oeternelle est decelé et rabbatu. Par René Benoist Angevin, docteur en theologie à Paris* (Paris: G. Guillard et T. Belot, 1564), (BnF D. 25703)
- *The Necessare and Assurit Way to Pluk Awa Al Discord in Religion*, trans. by Ninian Winzet (Paris: A. Briere, 1565), in *English Recusant Literature 1558-1640*, ed. by D. M. Rogers (London: Scholar Press, 1979)
- *Brieve et facile refutation d'un livret divulgé au nom de J. de L'Espine, se disant ministre de la parole de Dieu: auquel violentant et detorquant l'Escripture sainte, il blaspheme malheureusement le saint sacrifice evangelique, dict vulgairement la Sainte Messe. Par M. René Benoist Angevin, docteur regent en la Faculté de Theologie à Paris* (Paris: G. Chaudière, 1565), (BnF D. 25680)
- *Brieve et facile response aux objections d'une damoyselle, par lesquelles elle rejette la Sainte Messe, et ne la veult ouyr; ou il est monstré qu'elle doit estre dicte et celebrée en latin. Il a esté adjousté un brief traicté.*

contenant certaines raisons pour fortifier une autre damoyselle, assaillie et oppugnée en la foy par les heretiques. Par M. René Benoist Angevin, docteur regent en la Faculté de Theologie, à Paris (Paris: G. Chaudière, 1565), (BnF D. 25681)

- *Premier livre de la communion des saints, auquel il est traicté de l'honneur que les esleus de Dieu icy mortelz, doyvent faire aux saints vivans et glorieux au ciel. Par M. René Benoist Angevin docteur regent en la Faculté de Theologie à Paris (Paris: G. Chaudière, 1565), (Ars 8° T 4,624(5))*
- *Brieve resolution par l'expresse parole de Dieu, de ce qu'il fault sentir et tenir de l'usure: ensemble une response aux vaines raisons et eschappatoires des usuriers. Avec une briefve exhortation et advertissement des choses que les predicateurs doivent à present proposer au peuple. Par M. René Benoist, Angevin, docteur en theologie à Paris (Paris: N. Chesneau, 1565), (BnF D. 22002(4), Ars 8° T 4,624(4))*
- *Seconde remonstrance aux prestres, religieuses et moynes, qui sous le pretexte d'un licite mariage ont commis abhominable inceste et sacrilege. Ou est monstré evidemment qu'il n'est impossible, soit aux hommes ou aux femmes, de vivre en perpetuelle continence, par la grace de Dieu. Autheur M. René Benoist Angevin, docteur en theologie à Paris (Paris: N. Chesneau, 1565), (Ars 8° T 9031; 1567 edition: Ars 8° T 4,624(7))*
- *Catholicque discours de la confession sacramentelle, auquel il est prouvé icelle estre de droict divin: aussi qu'en la seule Eglise catholique est baillee la grace de Dieu, et remission des pechez. Autheur M. René Benoist Angevin, docteur en theologie à Paris (Paris: G. Chaudière, 1566), (BL 3901.aa.66(1))*
- *Catholicque et utile discours des chandelles, torches, et tout autre usage du feu en la profession de la foy et religion chrestienne: ou il est specialement traicté des chandelles que portent processionnellement les chrestiens le jour de la feste de la Purification de la glorieuse Vierge Marie mere de Dieu. Par M. René Benoist Angevin, docteur en theologie à Paris (Paris: G. Chaudière, 1566), (BL 3901.aa.66(4))*
- *Manifeste et necessaire probation de l'adoration de Jesus Christ, Dieu et homme en l'hostie sacree, tant en la Messe que en tout autre lieu auquel elle est presentee aux chrestiens. Et principalement es processions que font saintement et conformement à la parole de Dieu, les vrays chrestiens le jour de la feste du Saint Sacrement (Paris: G. Chaudière, 1566), (BL 3901.aa.66(1))*

- *Response a ceux qui appellent idolatres, les chrestiens et vray adoreurs. En laquelle est familierement monstré que c'est qu'adoration: à qui est due adoration, et quelle difference il y a entre l'adoration des creatures, et la vraye et souveraine, laquelle est due à Dieu seulement. Par M. René Benoist, Angevin, docteur en theologie, à Paris (Paris: G. Chaudière, 1566), (BL 3900.aaa.38)*

- *Traicté du saint jeusne de caresme: ou il est monstré iceluy estre de l'institution de Jesus Christ, et commandement de Dieu. Avec la troisieme epistre à Jean Calvin, Besze et tous autres partizans de sa secte, en laquelle de poinct en poinct, et presque de mot à mot, est respondu à ce qu'il a escrit en son institution (laquelle faulxement il dict chrestienne) contre le jeusne, discretion des viandes, et abstinence du caresme. Par M. René Benoist, Angevin, docteur régent en theologie à Paris (Paris: G. Chaudière, 1566), (Ars 8° T 4,624(2))*

- *Brief discours touchant le fondement du purgatoire apres ceste vie, des indulgences et pardons, et de satisfaction, troisieme partie de penitence. Auquel est prouvé par l'Ecriture sainte, que Dieu remettant, par sa grace, la coulpe et deformite du peché, il ne remet tousjours la peine entierement, ains veult que l'homme luy satisfasse. Par M. René Benoist, Angevin, docteur regent en la Faculté de Theologie, à Paris (Paris: N. Chesneau, 1566), (Ars 8° T 4,624(1))*

- *Exposition et resolution de certains principaux passages tant du Vieil que du Nouveau Testament, desquelz les heretiques de ce temps abusent contre la foy catholique, et la verité de l'Evangile, found in some copies of Benoist's 1566 Bible (see, for instance, Bod Bib.Fr.1566.b.1, JR R 59526, JR R 76258)*

- *Remonstrance aux prestres, religieuses et moynes, qui sous le pretexte d'un licite mariage, ont commis abhominable inceste et sacrilege. En laquelle est monstré evidemment que (moyennant la grace de Dieu) il n'est impossible, soit aux hommes ou aux femmes, de vivre en perpetuelle continence. Par M. René Benoist, Angevin, docteur regent en la Faculté de Theologie à Paris (Paris: N. Chesneau, 1567), (BnF D. 25710)*

- *Premier tome des refutations des impietez et apertes ignorances proposees contre la religion chrestienne, par Jean de L'Espine, soy disant ministre de la parole de Dieu: contenant la response aux blasphemes et cavillations qu'impudemment il a escrit contre le saint et divin sacrifice de la Messe. Par Maistre René Benoist Angevin, docteur regent en la Faculté de Theologie, à Paris (Paris: G. Chaudière, 1568), (BnF D. 25708)*

- *Le Triomphe et excellente victoire de la foy, par le moyen de la veritable et toute-puissante parole de Dieu. Ou est monstré le moyen certain et facile de*

pacifier les troubles presens. Le tout dedié au Roy, à la Royne: et aux catholiques Princes et Seigneurs de France. Par M. René Benoist, Angevin, docteur regent en Theologie à Paris (Paris: N. Chesneau, 1568), (BnF D. 22002(5))

- *Advertissement exhortatoire à ceux de la parroisse de S. Eustache à Paris, lesquels ayans esté seduicts et trompez sous couleur et pretexte d'une Eglise reformee et plus pure religion, se sont retranchez de la profession de la foy et religion chrestienne, proposee en l'Eglise catholique, hors laquelle il n'y a point de salut. Par M. René Benoist, docteur regent en la Faculté de Theologie, et curé de ladicte parroisse à Paris* (Paris: N. Chesneau, 1569), (BL 3900.aa.13)

- *Refutation des vains pretendus fondemens de certains lieux de l'Escriture sainte, desquels ordinairement les heretiques abusent pour corrompre la foy des simples, et impugner la presence reale du corps de Jesus Christ en l'hostie sacree. Avec une claire probation de la necessaire manducation de la substantielle et reale humanité de Jesus Christ au saint Sacrement de l'autel. Par M. René Benoist Angevin, docteur regent en la Faculté de Theologie à Paris* (Paris: N. Chesneau, 1569), (BnF D. 22002(2))

- *Advertissement du moyen par lequel aisement tous troubles et differens, tant touchant la croix, de laquelle y a si grande altercation en ceste ville de Paris, que autres concernans la religion, seront assopis et ostez: Par M. René Benoist Angevin, docteur regent en la Faculté de Theologie à Paris. A Messieurs les habitans de Paris* (Paris: T. Belot, 1571), (BnF Lb³³. 291)

- *Locorum praecipuorum sacrae Scripturae, tam Veteris quam Novi Testamenti, quibus corruptis inscitè, et pravè detortis abutuntur huius tempestatis haeretici apollionistae contra fidem catholicam, et veritatem evangelicam conquisitio, et catholica expositio, quae christianorum adversus omnes nunc vigenteis haereses, panoplia meritò dici potest. Opus cùm omnibus Scripturae sacrae studiosis, tum maximè concionatoribus catholicis, et ecclesiasticis quibuslibet perutile: atque potissimùm iis quibus cum haeticis frequens est disputatio necessarium. Duobus additis ad calcem stromatis: uno de obedientia verè fidelium, et rebellione infidelium haeticorum: altero de idololatria coenae Calvinicae. M. Renato Benedicto Andegavo, doctore theologo Parisiensi, et sacrarum literarum professore Regio, authore* (Paris: N. Chesneau, 1576), (Durham UL Cosin H.V.30)

- *Petit fragment catechistic d'une plus ample catechese de la magie reprehensible et des magiciens, pris de l'une des catecheses et opuscules de M. René Benoist Angevin, docteur en theologie et curé de S. Eustache à Paris, found in Pierre Massé, De l'Imposture et tromperie des diables,*

devins, enchanteurs [...] (Paris: J. Poupy, 1579), (Bod Douce M 191, GUL Sp Coll Ferguson Ag-c.36)

- *Traicté enseignant en bref les causes des malefices, sortileges et enchanteries, tant des ligatures et neuds d'esguillettes pour empescher l'action et exercice du mariage qu'autres, et du remede qu'il faut avoir à l'encontre. Par M. R. Benoist docteur et lecteur du roy en theologie et curé de Saint Eustache à Paris* (Paris: J. Poupy, 1579), (Bod Douce M 191, GUL Sp Coll Ferguson Ag-c.36, GUL Sp Coll Ferguson Ai-f.11)
- *Response a ceux qui appellent idolatres, les chrestiens catholiques, obeissans à l'Eglise de Jesus Christ lesquels sont à la verité les vrais adorateurs, et les esleus et enfans de Dieu, heritiers de ses promesses. En laquelle est familierement monstré que c'est qu'adoration: à qui est deuë adoration, et quelle difference il y a entre l'adoration des creatures, et la vraye et souveraine, laquelle est deuë à Dieu seulement, comme aussi que c'est que adorer en esprit et en verité. Y sont aussi adjouster quelques petis traictez de l'adoration de la croix, et de la maniere de mediter la passion de Jesus Christ. Par M. René Benoist docteur regent et lecteur du roy en la Faculté de Theologie, et curé de S. Eustache à Paris* (Paris: G. de la Noue, 1586), (Ars 8° T 8985)
- *Deux traictez catholiques. Le premier est de l'existence du purgatoire des chrestiens imparfaits, apres ceste vie mortelle. Le second est de la qualité et condition des ames separees des corps mortels. Par Monsieur M. René Benoist Angevin, docteur, regent et lecteur du roy en la Faculté de Theologie à Paris* (Paris: M. de Roigny, 1588), (Ars 8° T 4625)
- *Traicté des processions des chrestiens: auquel il est discoursu pourquoy la croix y est esleuee et portee. Premierement pourquoy les chrestiens la portent marque et signe. Par M. René Benoist docteur regent en la Faculté de Theologie, et curé de S. Eustache à Paris* (Paris: M. de Roigny, 1589), (BnF D. 25713)
- *Advertissement et conseil notable a la France, touchant ses presentes extremes miseres et calamitez, et la crainte de plus grandes, si elle ne fait penitence, retournant à son Dieu tout bon et misericordieux: où elle est advertie de sa maladie, de la cause, et du remede d'icelle. Par M. R. Benoist, docteur et lecteur du roy en theologie, et curé de Saint Eustache à Paris* (Paris: P. Hury, 1589), (BL 1192.g.14(3))
- *Second advertissement, et notable conseil a la France, touchant ses presentes extremes miseres et calamitez, et la crainte de plus grandes, avec changement de religion, mal extreme et tres-pernicieux contre lequel luy est icy proposé un certain antidote et propre remede, composé et faict par les trois plus doctes, excellentes et celebres, qui soient au monde, Facultez de*

- Theologie, à Paris, à Louvain, et à Cologne. Où est adousté un brief et parfait catechisme, avec un abbrege et compendium du livre tres-utile, dict le Grand Ordinaire des chrestiens: et un sommaire de toute l'Escriture sainte. Le tout dressé et accommodé à nostre temps, par M. R. Benoist, docteur et lecteur du roy en theologie, et curé de S. Eustache à Paris (Paris: P. Hury, 1589), (BnF Lb³⁵. 108)*
- *Plainte et requeste presentee a nostre tressainct, tresconstant, et tresvigilant pere le Pape Sixte V. pour et au nom de l'Eglise gallicane, miserablement tourmentee et affligee. Traduite du latin de M. René Benoist, docteur en la Faculté de Theologie de Paris, et lecteur du roy en icelle (Paris: P. le Roy, 1590), (Bod Godw. subt. 333)*
- *Troisiesme advertissement à la France, et principalement à la Cour, et à la grande ville de Paris, justement divinement punies. P. M. René Benoist, docteur et lecteur du roy en la Faculté de Theologie, et curé de S. Eustache à Paris (Paris: G. de la Noue, 1591), (BN Lb³⁵. 109)*
- *Version, paraphrase et briefve explication du psalme Exaudiat te Dominus. Au Roy tres-chrestien Henry quatriesme. Par M. René Benoist confesseur de sa majesté (Paris: F. Jacquin, 1595), (BnF A. 12658)*
- *Quadri-partit. Contenant quatre charitables et notables advertissemens, pour appaiser Dieu, et avoir une paix bonne et assurée. 1. Pour le peuple. 2. Pour les ecclesiastiques. 3. Pour la noblesse. 4. Pour les magistrats. Par M. René Benoist, docteur en theologie, confesseur du roy, conseiller de son estat, et nommé par sa majesté à l'evesché de Troyes (Troyes: J. Moreau, 1595), (BN Lb³⁵. 663)*
- *Remonstrance a Messieurs de l'Assemblée tenue a Rouen, par le commandement du roy au mois de novembre, 1596. Par M. René Benoist, conseiller, confesseur du roi, et nommé par sa majesté, à l'evesché de Troyes (Paris: S. Moreau, 1596), (BL 3900.aa.26)*
- *Briefve proposition des admirables conversions a la vraye foy, Eglise et religion catholique de S. Paul et de S. Augustin avec l'application d'icelles: comme aussi du present jubilé, envoyée et dediée à l'altesse de tres-sage, tres-vertueuse et magnanime princesse, Madame la duchesse de Bar, soeur unique du roy tres-chrestien. Par M. R. Benoist, doyen de la Faculté de Theologie à Paris, confesseur du roy, et nommé par sa majesté à l'evesché de Troyes (Paris: P. Chevallier, 1601), (BL 1489.h.34(5))*
- *Sermon de la disposition requise pour le lavement des pieds, pour l'adoration de la croix qui se fait le vendredy saint, et pour gagner le jubilé, et pour cognoistre et apprehender l'auctorité de nostre saint pere le pape en la concession des indulgences et pardons: faict et prononcé en la*

ville d'Orleans le jeudy absolu, devant le roy, et les princes et seigneurs estans lors à la cour. Par M. René Benoist, doyen de la sacrée Faculté de Theologie à Paris, confesseur du roy, et nommé par sa majesté, à l'evesché de Troyes (Paris: P. Chevallier, 1601), (BnF D. 25712)

- *Advertissement et exhortation aux François, de rendre humbles et devotes actions de graces à Dieu eternel, de ce qu'il nous a delivrés de quelques grands dangers les jours passés: comme aussi le prier de nous preserver contre plusieurs autres paradvventure plus dangereux, desquels il nous menasse par sa parole, par les astres, et par l'indisposition des elemens et des saisons. Avec un ephemeride merveillex de l'an 1602. Par M. R. B. doyen de la Faculté de Theologie à Paris, confesseur du roy, son conseiller d'estat, et nommé par sa majesté à l'evesché de Troyes (Paris: P. Chevallier, 1602), (BN Lb³⁵. 781)*
- *Traicté enseignant que c'est que le caresme: et la maniere de l'observer chrestienement et salutairement. Au Roy, et a sa Cour. Par M. René Benoist, confesseur de sa majesté (Paris: P. Chevallier, 1603), (BnF D. 25714)*
- *Panoplia catholicorum contra haereticos, in Ricoldus de Montecrucis, Propugnaculum fidei, toti christianae religioni adversum mendacia, et deliramenta saracenorum, alchorani precipuè maxime utile. Authore R. P. Magistro F. Ricoldo, Florentino ordinis praedicatorum, impressum denuo, et illustratum opera R. P. F. Marci Antonij Serafini Veneti baccalaurei in conventu sanctorum Joannis, et Pauli eiusdem ordinis. Adiecta est panoplia catholicorum contra haereticos, authore Magistro Renato Benedicto Andegavo doctore Parisiensi ob similitudinem argumenti (Venice: apud D. de Imbertis, 1607), (Bod 4° R 6 Th. Seld.)*
- *Notables resolutions des presens differens de la religion: prononcees par diverses predications, en plus de cinquante caresmes, preschez tant en ce royaume, que hors iceluy. Le tout dressé sur chacun jour de caresme. Par M. René Benoist, confesseur du roy, conseiller de sa majesté en son conseil d'estat et privé, et son predicateur et aumosnier, doyen de la theologie, et curé de S. Eustache à Paris, 2 vols (Paris: P. Chevallier, 1608), (Bod 8° B 89 Th., Ars 8° T 6254)*
- *Declaration de feu nostre maistre messire René Benoit docteur en theologie curé de S. Eustache à Paris, sur la traduction des Bibles et annotations d'icelles. Ensemble la censure de nostre s. pere (Paris: F. du Pré, 1608), (BnF D. 25696)*

ii) Works edited, prefaced or translated by Benoist

Augustine, St, *Trois sermons de S. Augustin, non moins doctes que utiles en ce temps. Les deux premiers traictant du nom et devoir du chrestien, et l'autre est la necessité de payer les dismes. Auquels il est enseigné que ceux qui adherent aux magies, sorceleries, superstitions et infestations diaboliques, pour neant sont chrestiens et abusent de leur foy. Traduits en françois par M. René Benoist, docteur et lecteur du roy en theologie, et curé de S. Eustache à Paris* (Paris: J. Poupy, 1579), (Bod Douce M 191, GUL Sp Coll Ferguson Ag-c.36)

Ficino, Marsilio, *Marsilii Ficini Florentini summi et philosophi et theologi, de Religione Christiana opus plane divinum, et huic nostro seculo pernecessarium. Huic liber redditus est pristino suo nitori, et infinitarum propemodum sacrae Scripturae auctoritatum margini adiectis locis multum locupletatus: atque brevi tabula illustrium totius operis sententiarum illustratus*, ed. by René Benoist (Paris: G. Guillard, 1559), (Durham UL Cosin C.6.3/4, Durham UL Routh IX.G.1)

Le Grand Ordinaire ou instruction commune des chrestiens, Auquel sont contenus et enseignez les principaux fondemens de la religion chrestienne pour salutairement vivre en l'observance des comandemens de Dieu, et tenir le chemin de salut. Nouvellement reveu, corrigé, et augmenté, avec trois petits traictez fort utiles en ce temps, à ceux qui desirent vivre chastement, tant en religion que dehors. Par M. René Benoist docteur regent en la Faculté de Theologie, et curé de S. Eustache à Paris (Paris: G. de la Noue, 1580), (BnF D. 25701)

Lindt, Willem Van der, *Discours en forme de dialogue, ou histoire tragique, en laquelle est nayvement depeinte et descrite la source, origine, cause et progres des troubles, partialitez et differens qui durent encores aujourd'huy, meuz par Luther, Calvin et leurs conjurez et partizans contre l'Eglise catholique. Traduit du latin de R. P. Guillaume Lindan evesque alleman, en nostre langue françoise par M. R. Benoist Angevin docteur en theologie à Paris. A tous freres catholiques des Allemagnes et Gaules. Apres l'advertissement au peuple françois est briefvement déclaré au bien affecté lecteur jugeant sans passion privée, et qui n'est aveuglé de hayne contre la verité, le fruict qu'on peut recueillir de ces dialogues* (Paris: G. Chaudière, 1566), (BL 1509/4690)

Le Manuel de devotion: extraict des saints peres et docteurs illustres, tant anciens, que modernes: et mis par bon ordre en latin, par M. Simon Verrepe, traduit en françois: par J. B. et finalement reveu, par M. René Benoist [...]. Nouvellement enrichy d'un calendrier catholique, et d'un petit catechisme: et de quelques oraisons prises de Arn. Sorbin, dict de S. Foy [...]. Plus, sept pseumes penitentialux, latin et françois, avec annotations

sur chacun verset, par M. François Grandin: et encor plusieurs oraisons et pratiques de l'homme chrestien, par [...] F. Nicole Grenier [...] (Paris: N. Chesneau, 1575), (Durham Chapter HIII.B.27)

L'Ordre et les ceremonies du sacre et couronnement du tres-chrestien roy de France, latin et françois, traduit par M. Rene Benoist Angevin, docteur en theologie, et curé de Saint Eustache à Paris (Paris: N. Chesneau, 1575), (BL C.35.c.27, BnF Li.²⁵ 2, Ars 8° H 12566)

Proclus, *Petit traicté de la manière de celebrer la Sainte Messe en la primitive Eglise, par le saint pere Proclus, archevesque de Constantinople, faict françois par M. René Benoist, Angevin, docteur en theologie à Paris, et dedié par luy à tres chrestienne et tres vertueuse princesse Madame Marie Stuart, royne d'Escosse et douairiere de France* (Paris: N. Chesneau, 1564; repr. Prince Augustin Galitzin, 1858), (BL 3478.bbb.49)

Viel, P., *Histoire de la vie, mort, passion et miracles des saints [...]. Extraicte des escrits grecs de Simeon Metaphraste, d'Aloisius Lypomanus, evesque tres-digne, et d'autres antiques auteurs catholiques approuvez: comme aussi des chartres et livres non imprimez, qui sont és thresors de diverses eglises et abbayes de ce royaume de France. Par Maistre P. Viel, docteur en theologie, de la Faculté de Paris: Jacques Tigeou Angevin, docteur en theologie, de la Faculté de Rheims, chanoine et chancelier en l'eglise cathedrale de Mets: M. Clement Marchant, M. Jean Le Frere de Laval, et Paschal Robin, Seigneur du Faux, Angevin. Plus sont adjoustez quelques doctes et catholiques opuscles appartenans à ceste matiere, qui serviront d'introduction et d'excitation à tous bien affectez pour lire devotement et salutairement toutes les legendes des saints, prins du livre des opuscles de Monsieur N. M. René Benoist, curé de Saint Eustache, docteur regent et lecteur du roy en la sacrée theologie à Paris. Le tout reveu et mis en meilleur ordre et suite, qu'és precedentes editions, et augmenté de plusieurs vies de saints [...]* (Paris: B. Macé, 1602), (Bod H 3.15 Th.), (see also 1607 Bonfons edition: BnF Rés H. 386; 1610 Chevallier edition: BL C.73.f.1, Bod Douce S subt. 3)

b) Bibles and New Testaments, including those edited by Benoist

i) Early-printed French Bibles and New Testaments

ii) Other Bibles

Bibles are listed in chronological order and then by publisher; editions containing the New Testament alone are placed after complete Bibles. Where title-pages are missing or damaged, Chambers' bibliography has been used to provide full details.

i) Early-printed French Bibles and New Testaments

Cy commence lexposicion et la vraye declaracion de la bible tant du viel que du novel testament principalement suz toutes les ystoires principales dudit viel et novel testament [...] ([Lyons]: [M. Huss], [c.1477]), (C5, BExp[c.1477,hus](2); BL IB. 41604)

Cy commence la table du nouveau testament [...] *Cy commence le nouveau testament* ([Lyons]: [G. Le Roy pour B. Buyer], [c.1479]), (C7, N[c.1479]buy; BL IB. 41510)

Cy commencent les rubriques de ce present livre ([Lyons]: [G. Le Roy pour B. Buyer], [c.1479-80]), (C8, BA[c.1479-80,roy]; BL IB. 41509)

Le premier volume de la bible historiee and le second volume de la bible en françois historiee ([Paris]: [A. Vérard], [c.1495-96]), (C13, BH[c.1495-96]ver; Ars fol. T.508)

La bible en francoys (Paris: M. le Noir, [c.1510]), (C18, BA[c.1510]noi; BL 1004.c.1)

Le premier volume and le second volume de la bible en françoiz ([Paris]: [A. Vérard], [c.1510]), (C17, BH[c.1510]ver; BL 3037.ee.4)

Le premier volume and le second volume de la bible en francoys ([Lyons]: [P. Bailly], [1521]), (C30, BH1521bai; BL 466.d.6, Douce B.subt.5)

Les choses contenues en ce present livre ([Paris]: [S. de Colines], [1523]), (C31, N1523col; BL C.111.c.13, Bod 8° Z 454 Th.)

Les choses contenues en ce present Livre (Antwerp: G. Vorsterman, 1525), (C38, N1525-24vor; Durham UL Bamburgh Select. 28)

Le premier volume de l'ancien testament: contenant les cinq livres de Moïse: à savoir: Genèse: Exode: Levitique: les Nombres: et Deuteronomie translatez en françois, selon la pure et entière translation de saint Hierome. Ausquelz sont contenuz les merveilles de Dieu: avec la loi, les jugemens, les sacrifices, et ceremonies commandées de la bouche de Dieu: et aussi les promesses de Christ faites aux prophètes (Antwerp: M. Lempereur, 1528), (C43, B1528-32lem; Bod Mason FF 83 (vol. IV))

La sainte Bible. en François, translatee selon la pure et entière traduction de saint Hierome, conférée et entièrement revisitée, selon les plus anciens et plus corrects exemplaires Ou sus ung chascun Chapitre est mis brief argument, avec plusieurs figures et Histoires: aussi les Concordances en marge au dessus des estoilles, diligemment revisitées. Avec ce sont deux Tables: L'une pour les matières des deux Testamentz: L'autre pour trouver toutes les Epistres, tant de l'ancien comme du Nouveau Testament et les Evangiles, qui sont lues en l'Eglise par toute l'année: tant es Dimanches comme es jours FERIAUX et Festes (Antwerp: M. Lempereur, 1530), (C51, B1530lem; BL C.18.c.12, Bod Bib.Fr.1530.c.1, Ars fol. T.130-31)

La première partie du nouveau Testament: contenant ce qui sensuyt [...] ([Lyons]: [P. de Wingle], [c.1530]), (C53, N[c.1530,win]; Bod Mason D 23)

Le nouveau Testament de nostre sauveur Jesu Christ translate selon le vray text en françois [...] (Antwerp: J. Grapheus, 1532), (C58, N1532gra; BL 3025.c.15)

La sainte Bible en François, translatee selon la pure et entière traduction de Saint Hierome, derechief conférée et entièrement revisitée selon les plus anciens et plus corrects exemplaires. Ou sus ung chascun Chapitre est mis brief argument. Avec ce sont deux tables, dont l'une est pour les diversitez de certaines manières de parler figuratifz et de divers mots quant à leur propre signification: L'autre table est pour trouver les Epistres et Evangiles de toute l'année, Avec brief recueil des ans du monde. Outre plus l'interprétation de certains noms Hebraïques, Chaldeens, Grecz, et Latins (Antwerp: M. Lempereur, 1534), (C62, B1534lem; Bod Douce B.subt.6, Ars fol. T.135)

La Bible Qui est toute la Sainte escripture. En laquelle sont contenus, le Vieil Testament et le Nouveau, translatez en François. Le Vieil de Lebreu: et le Nouveau, du Grec. Aussi deux amples tables, l'une pour l'interprétation des propres noms: l'autre en forme d'indice, pour trouver plusieurs sentences et matières ([Neuchâtel]: [P. de Wingle], [1535]), (C66, B1535win; BL 1.d.1, Bod Douce B.subt.4)

Le nouveau Testament, auquel est demonstre Jesu Christ sauveur du monde, estre venu annonce de Dieu a noz Peres anciens des le commencement du monde, et en plusieurs lieulx predict par les Prophetes: Avec la declaration des oeuvres par lesquelles lhome peult estre congneu, et en soy et des autres, fidele ou infidele (Antwerp: M. Lempereur, 1535), (C68, N1535lem; BL 1110.a.42)

Le premier volume and le second volume de la bible en francoiz ([Paris]: [A. Bonnemere], [1537-38]), (C71, BH1537-38bon; BL C.51.g.4)

Le Nouveau Testament, Cest a dire. La nouvelle Alliance. De nostre Seigneur et seul sauveur Jesus Christ. Translate de Grec en Francoys ([Geneva]: [J. Michel], 1538), (C76, N1538mic; BL 1110.b.6, Bod Mason M 15)

Le nouveau Testament auquel est demonstre Jhesu Christ nostre Sauveur, et en plusieurs lieu predict par les prophetes, avec la declaration des oeuvres et myracles quil a fait, et avons ensuyvy la plus corecte copie imprimee ([Antwerp]: J. de Liesvest, 1539), (C77, N1539lie; Bod Douce BB 11)

Le Nouveau Testament, C'est à dire, La Nouvelle Alliance, de nostre Seigneur et seul Sauveur Jesus Christ, Translaté de Grec en Francoys ([Basle]: [J. Walder?], 1539), (C78, N1539[basle]; BL C.36.d.8)

La Bible en laquelle sont contenus tous les livres canoniques, de la sainte escriture, tant du vieil que du nouveau Testament: et pareillement les Apocryphes. Le tout translaté en langue françoise, avec diligente collation: non seulement aux anciens et fideles examplaires, mais aussi à loriginal et signamment des canoniques ([Geneva]: [J. Girard], 1540), (C82, B1540[gir]; BL 3022.dd.9, Bod Bib.Fr.1540.e.1)

La sainte Bible en Francois, translatee selon la pure et entiere traduction de Saint Hierome, derechief conferee et entierement revisitee selon les plus anciens et plus correctz exemplaires. Ou sus ung chascun Chapitre est mis brief argument. Avec ce sont deux tables, dont lune est pour les diversitez daucunes manieres de parlers figuratifz et de divers motz quant a leur propre signification: Lautre table est pour trouver les Epistres et Evangiles de toute lannee, avec brief recueil des ans du monde. Oultre plus Linterpretation daucuns noms Hebraïques, Chaldeens, Grecz, et Latins (Antwerp: A. de la Haye, 1541), (C85, B1541hay; Durham UL Cosin A.II.10)

La Bible translatee de latin en francois au vray sens pour les simples gens qui nentendent pas latin corrigeée et imprimee nouvellement (Paris: P. Regnault, 1543), (C98, BA1543reg; BL 3025.b.1)

Le Nouveau Testament de nostre Seigneur Jesu Christ, seul sauveur du monde, nouvellement imprime avec les figures des Evangiles et des Actes, et de l'apocalypse. Item il y sont adjoustées les Epistres du vieil Testament, que on chante en L'eglise au long de L'année (Antwerp: J. Richard, [1543]). (C104, N1543ric; BL 3025.c.1)

La Bible translatee de Latin en Francoys, au vray sens, pour les simples gens qui n'entendent pas latin corrigée et Imprimée nouvellement (Paris: P. Regnault, [1545?]), (C117, BA[1545?]reg; BL 3025.b.13)

La Bible, Qui est toute la sainte esriture, En laquelle sont contenuz, le vieil Testament et le nouveau, translatez en Francois, et reveuz: le vieil selon l'Ebrieu, et le nouveau selon le Grec (Geneva: J. Girard, 1546), (C128, B1546gir; BL 217.k.11)

La Sainte Bible. Contenant les Saintes escritures, tant du Vieil, que du Nouveau Testament, avec aucunes des plus singulieres Figures, et Pourtraitz necessaires pour l'intelligence de beaucoup de passages. Le tout reveu diligemment (Lyons: B. Arnoullet, 1550), (C146, B1550arn; BL 1605/716)

La Sainte Bible Nouvellement translatée de Latin en Francois, selon l'edition Latine, dernièrement imprimée à Louvain: reveuë, corrigée, et approuvée par gens sçavants, à ce deputez. A chascun chapitre sont adjouxtes les Sommaires, contenant la matiere du dict chapitre, les Concordances, et aucunes apostilles aux marges (Louvain: B. de Grave, A. M. Bergagne et J. de Waen, 1550), (C145, B1550gra-ber-wae; BL C.80.h.1)

La Bible, Qui est toute la sainte Escriture, En laquelle sont contenuz, le vieil Testament, et le nouveau, translatez en François, et reveuz: le vieil selon l'Hebrieu, et le nouveau selon le Grec (Geneva: J. Crespin, 1551), (C150, B1551cre(1); Bod AA.171.Th.Seld)

La Sainte Bible. Avec les figures et Pourtraits du Tabernacle de Moyse, et du Temple de Salomon, et maison du Liban (Lyons: J. de Tournes, 1551), (C153, B1551tou; BL L.10.d.6)

La Bible, Qui est toute la sainte Escriture, En laquelle sont contenuz le vieil Testament, et le nouveau: translatez en François et reveuz: le vieil selon l'Hebrieu, et le nouveau selon le Grec ([Geneva]: J. Crespin, 1554), (C188, B1554cre(3); BL 3025.d.11)

La Sainte Bible (Lyons: J. de Tournes, 1554), (C191, B1554tou; BL C.108.m.9)

La Bible Nouvellement Translatée, Avec la suite de l'histoire depuis le tems d'Esdras jusqu'aux Maccabées: e depuis les Maccabées jusqu'a Christ. Item avec des Annotacions sur les passages difficiles. Par Sebastian

Chateillon (Basle: J. Hervage, 1555), (C202, B1555chat; BL C.51.f.6, Bod B.16.5.Th.)

La Bible, Qui est toute la sainte Esriture, En laquelle sont contenuz le Vieil et Nouveau Testament: Translatez en François et reveuz diligemment: Le Vieil selon l'Ebrieu, et le Nouveau selon le Grec. Avec les Sommaires, qui sont au commencement d'un chacun Chapitre (Lyons: les heritiers de feu J. Michel, 1556), (C228, B1556mic; BL 218.k.1)

La Bible Qui est toute la sainte Esriture contenant Le Vieil et Nouveau Testament, ou Alliance ([Geneva]: M. de la Roche, 1558), (C241, B1558roc; BL C.108.h.14)

Le Nouveau Testament de nostre Seigneur Jesus Christ (Lyons: T. Payan, 1558), (C250, N1558pay; Bod Douce BB 22)

La Sainte Bible (Lyons: J. de Tournes, 1559), (C256, B1559tou; Bod Douce B.subt.10)

La Bible, Qui est toute la sainte Esriture, contenant le vieil et le nouveau Testament: ou, la vieille et nouvelle alliance. Quant a la traduction du vieil Testament reveue en ceste impression, et aux annotations adjoinctes a icelle, lisez ce qui en est dict en l'Epistre: quant au nouveau, il a esté reveu et corrigé sur le Grec par l'advis des ministres de Geneve. On a aussi adjousté quelques figures de grande consequence, et amendé aucunes de celles des precedentes impressions ([Geneva]: R. Estienne [H. Estienne], 1560), (C261, B1560est; Durham UL Cosin A.II.6)

La Bible, Qui est toute la sainte Esriture, contenant le Vieil et le Nouveau Testament: ou, la vieille et nouvelle alliance. Quant est du nouveau Testament, il a esté reveu et corrigé sur le Grec par l'avis des ministres de Geneve. Aussi avec les figures, on a adjousté des Annotations fort amples, et non par cidevant imprimees ([Geneva]: A. Rebul, 1560), (C264, B1560reb(fol); Ars fol. T.138)

La Bible, qui est Toute la sainte Esriture: ascavoir, le vieil et nouveau Testament: Avec argumens sur chacun livre, annotations augmentees, et nouvelles sur les Apocryphes. Quant au nouveau Testament, il a este reveu et corrigé sur le Grec par les Ministres de Geneve, comme on verra en leur Epistre qui est a la fin de l'Apocalypse. Il y a aussi plusieurs figures et cartes, tant chorographiques qu'autres de nouveau adjoustees, desquelles voyez l'Epistre qui s'ensuit en la page prochaine. Plus un Indice copieux pour promptement trouver les matieres plus notables de l'Esriture ([Geneva]: N. Barbier et T. Courteau, 1561), (C269, B1561bar-cou; Ars 4^o T.63)

La Sainte Bible (Lyons: S. Honoré, 1562), (C288, B1562hon; Bod Bib.Fr.1562.e.1)

La Bible, Qui est toute la sainte Esriture, contenant le Vieil et le Nouveau Testament: ou, la vieille et nouvelle alliance. Quant est du nouveau Testament, il a esté reveu et corrigé sur le Grec, par l'avis des Ministres de Geneve. Aussi avec les figures, on a adjousté des Annotations, fort amples sur toute la Bible ([Geneva]: F. Jacquy, 1562), (C284, B1562jaq,per(1); BL 464.b.6,7)

Le Nouveau Testament de nostre Seigneur Jesus Christ. Reveu et corrigé sur le Grec, avec annotations, adjoustées par l'advis des Ministres de Geneve (Lyons: S. Honoré, 1562), (C304, N1562hon; BL 3025.c.20)

Le Nouveau Testament, C'est à dire, La nouvelle alliance de nostre Seigneur Jesus Christ, Reveu et corrigé de nouveau sur le Grec, par l'advis des Ministres de Geneve, avec Annotations reveuës et augmentees par M. Augustin Marlorat (Geneva: par F. Perrin pour J. Durant, 1563), (C323, N1563per/dur; BL 1006.b.27)

Le Nouveau Testament, c'est à dire, La nouvelle alliance de nostre Seigneur Jesus Christ. Reveu et corrigé de nouveau sur le Grec par l'advis des Ministres de Geneve. Avec Annotations reveues et augmentees par M. Augustin Marlorat (Lyons: J. Frellon, 1563), (C325, N1563fre; BL 3022.a.37)

Le Nouveau Testament, c'est a dire, La Nouvelle Alliance de nostre Seigneur Jesus Christ. Reveu de nouveau et corrigé sur le Grec par l'advis des Ministres de Geneve. Avec annotations reveues et de nouveau augmentées par M. Augustin Marlorat (Caen: P. Philippe, 1563), (C316, N1563phi; BL 3025.c.21.(1.))

La Bible, Qui est Toute la sainte Esriture, contenant le Vieil et le Nouveau Testament: ou, la vieille et nouvelle alliance. Le Nouveau Testament, a esté reveu et corrigé de nouveau sur le Grec. Avec les figures, et Annotations soingneusement reveuës et augmentées outre les precedentes impressions (Lyons: H. Hylaire and L. Cloquemin, 1564), (C334, B1564hyl-clo; Durham Ushaw I.D.5.7)

La Bible, Qui est toute la sainte Esriture: contenant le Vieil et le Nouveau Testament (Geneva: F. Perrin, 1564), (C333, B1564per; BL 1159.d.6)

Le Nouveau Testament, C'est à dire, La nouvelle alliance de nostre Seigneur Jesus Christ. Reveu et corrigé de nouveau sur le Grec, par l'advis des Ministres de Geneve: Avec Annotations reveuës et augmentees par M.

Augustin Marlorat (Lyons: G. Cotier, 1564), (C342, N1564cot; BL 3022.a.35)

La Bible, Qui est toute la sainte Esriture: contenant Le vieil et le nouveau Testament, autrement, La vieille et la nouvelle Alliance. On a nouvellement adjousté en ceste edition entre autres choses, des figures esquelles sont cotez les passages correspondans des quatre derniers livres de Moyse ([Geneva]: H. Estienne, 1565), (C350, B1565est; Bod Bib.Fr.1565.c.1)

Le Nouveau Testament, C'est à dire, La nouvelle alliance de nostre Seigneur Jesus Christ. Reveu et corrigé sur le Grec par l'advis des ministres de Geneve (Geneva: J. Durant, 1565), (C354, N1565dur(1); BL 3049.a.10)

†*La Sainte Bible Contenant le Vieil et Nouveau Testament, Traduitte en François, selon la version commune: Avec annotations necessaires pour l'intelligence des lieux les plus difficiles: et expositions contenant briefves et familiares Resolutions des lieux qui ont esté depravés et corrompus par les heretiques de nostre temps: Aussi les figures et argumens sur chacun livre, declarans sommairement tout ce que y est contenu. Par M. René Benoist, Angevin, Docteur Regent en la faculté de Theologie à Paris* (Paris: G. Buon, 1566), (C372, B1566buo; JR R 76258). Multiple printer edition; some copies have address of N. Chesneau (C373, B1566che; BL L.10.e.3, JR R 59526), M. Guillard (C374, B1566gui; Bod Bib.Fr.1566.b.1, Ars fol. T.140 (vol.II)) or S. Nyvelle (C371, B1566nyv; Ars fol. T.139)

La Bible, Qui est toute la sainte Esriture: contenant le Vieil et le Nouveau Testament (Geneva: Z. Durant, 1566), (C364, B1566dur(1); BL C.48.d.13)

La Sainte Bible, Contenant le Vieil et Nouveau Testament: ou, la vieille et nouvelle Alliance: Avec toutes les Annotations necessaires pour l'intelligence de l'Esriture: Aussi les Figures, Cartes chorographiques, et Argumens sur chacun livre declarans brievement tout ce qui y est contenu (Lyons: S. Honorat, 1566), (C366, B1566hon; BL C.23.e.10, Bod Bib.Fr.1566.b.2-3)

La Bible, qui est toute la sainte Esriture: reveue outre les precedentes impressions, et corrigee en plusieurs lieux, sur les textes Hebrieu et Grec. Plus sont adjoustees les cartes chorographiques (Orléans: L. Rabier, 1566). (C370, B1566rab; BL 3022.cc.2)

La Bible, qui est toute la sainte Esriture: contenant le Vieil et le Nouveau Testament, Autrement La Vieille et Nouvelle Alliance. Avec argumens sur chacun livre, figures, cartes tant chorographiques qu'autres ([Geneva]: par F. Perrin pour A. Vincent, 1566), (C363, B1566per/vin; BL 1105.c.5)

†*Le Nouveau Testament de nostre Seigneur Jesus Christ, Latin et François, selon la version commune, chacune version correspondante l'une à l'autre, verset à verset. Avec annotations et expositions des lieux les plus difficiles: et principalement de ceux qui ont esté depravés et corrompus par les heretiques de nostre temps: Par M. René Benoist, Angevin, Docteur regent en la faculté de Theologie à Paris* (Paris: N. Chesneau, 1566), (C378a, N1566che; BL 3091.k.47). Multiple printer edition; some copies have address of M. Guillard (C379, N1566gui, BL 3005.aa.11) and S. Nyvelle (C378, N1566nyv) (currently none are known for G. Buon)

La Bible, qui est toute la sainte Esriture: contenant le Vieil et le Nouveau Testament. Autrement, La Vieille et Nouvelle Alliance. Avec argumens sur chacun livre, figures, cartes tant chorographiques qu'autres ([Geneva]: F. Estienne, 1567), (C381, B1567est; Bod Bib.Fr.1567.e.2)

La Bible, qui est toute la sainte Esriture. Reveue outre les precedentes impressions, et corrigeée en plusieurs lieux, sur les textes Hebrieu et Grec (Paris, P. Haultin, 1567), (C383, B1567hau; BL 3049.b.9.)

La Bible, qui est toute la sainte Esriture: contenant le Vieil et le Nouveau Testament, Autrement La Vieille et Nouvelle Alliance. Avec argumens sur chacun livre, figures, cartes tant chorographiques qu'autres ([Geneva]: par F. Perrin pour A. Vincent, 1567), (C382, B1567per/vin; Bod Bib.Fr.1567.e.1)

Biblia Latinogallica. La Bible Françoiselatine, Qui est toute la sainte Esriture, contenant Le Vieil et Nouveau Testament, ou Alliance (Geneva: J. Bourgeois, 1568), (C395, B1568bou; BL 3021.f.6, Bod Douce B.subt.3)

†*La Sainte Bible Contenant le Vieil et Nouveau testament, Latin François, chacune version correspondante l'une à l'autre, verset à verset. Avec annotations necessaires pour l'intelligence des lieux les plus difficiles: et Expositions contenant briefves et familiares Resolutions et Observations tant des lieux qui ont esté depravez et corrompus par les heretiques de nostre temps, que de ceux qui ouvertement confirment la Foy et Religion Catholique. Aussi les figures et argumens sur chascun livre, declarans sommairement tout ce que y est contenu. Par M. René Benoist, Angevin, Docteur Regent en la faculté de Theologie à Paris* (Paris: G. Buon, 1568), (C400, B1568buo; Ars 4° T.58). Multiple printer edition; some copies have address of N. Chesneau (C401, B1568che; EUL E.B. 22051), M. Guillard (C402, B1568gui) and S. Nyvelle (C399, B1568nyv; BL 3022.i.8, Bod Douce BB 198-99; Ars 4° T.59).

Le Nouveau Testament, C'est à dire, La nouvelle Alliance de nostre Seigneur Jesus Christ. Reveu et corrigé sur le Grec par l'advis des Ministres de Geneve. Avec argumens fort amples mis au devant de chacun Livre, ou

Epistre, outre les sommaires ordinaires (Geneva: J. B. Pinereul, 1568). (C404, N1568pin; BL C.48.a.1(1))

La Bible, qui est, toute la sainte Esriture: contenant le Vieil et le Nouveau Testament. Autrement La Vieille et Nouvelle Alliance. Avec argumens sur chacun livre, figures, cartes tant chorographiques qu'autres ([Geneva]: E. Anastase, 1570), (C417, B1570ana; BL 3025.b.21)

Le Nouveau Testament de nostre Seigneur Jesus Christ: Traduit de Latin en François, Par les Theologiens de Louvain (Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1573). (C431, N1573pla(2); BL 3022.ccc.15)

La Sainte Bible (Lyons: B. Honorat, 1578), (C440, B1578hon; Durham Chapter E.II.37)

La Sainte Bible, contenant le Vieil et Nouveau Testament; traduite de Latin en François. Avec les Argumens sur chacun livre, declarans sommairement tout ce que y est contenu (Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1578), (C439, B1578pla; BL L.9.f.4)

†*Le Nouveau Testament de nostre Seigneur Jesus Christ. Latin et François, selon la version commune, chacune version correspondante l'une à l'autre, verset à verset. Avec annotations et expositions des lieux les plus difficiles: et principalement de ceux qui ont esté depravés et corrompus par les heretiques de nostre temps. Par M. René Benoist, Angevin, Docteur regent en la faculté de Theologie à Paris* (Rouen: G. Pavie, 1578), (C441a, N1578pav; BL 3022.aaa.21)

La Bible, Qui est toute la Sainte Esriture, Contenant le Vieil et le Nouveau Testament: ou, la vielle et la nouvelle Alliance. On a adjouste en ceste edition entre autres choses, les argumens sur chacun livre, figures, cartes, tant chorographiques que autres: avec l'Harmonie des passages correspondans des quatre derniers livres de Moyse. Plus divers indices des noms propres expliquez, des passages du vieil Testament alleguez au Nouveau, des mots plus obscurs en la Bible, et des matieres principales y contenues, recueillis pour plus facile intelligence de l'Esriture Sainte ([Geneva]: J. Stoer, 1580), (C447, B1580sto; Bod C.3.5.Th.)

†*Le Nouveau Testament de nostre Seigneur Jesus Christ. Latin et François, selon la version commune, chacune version correspondante l'une à l'autre, verset à verset. Avec annotations et expositions des lieux les plus difficiles: et principalement de ceux qui ont esté depravez et corrompus par les heretiques de nostre temps. Par M. René Benoist, Angevin, Docteur regent en la faculté de Theologie à Paris* (Rouen: J. Crevel, 1580) (C456a, N1580cre; BL 3022.aa.23)

†*Le Nouveau Testament de nostre Seigneur Jesus Christ. Avec Annotations et expositions des lieux les plus difficiles: par M. René Benoist Angevin docteur. Le tout reveu par F. Jean Henten* (Rouen: R. Mallard, 1581). (C463, N1581mal; BL 03025.de.5)

†*Le Nouveau Testament de nostre Seigneur Jesus Christ. Latin et François, selon la version commune, chacune version correspondante l'une à l'autre, verset à verset. Avec annotations et expositions des lieux les plus difficiles: et principalement de ceux qui ont esté depravez et corrompus par les heretiques de nostre temps. Par M. René Benoist, Angevin, Docteur regent en la faculté de Theologie à Paris* (Rouen: R. L'Allemand, 1585) (C504, N1585all; BL 3022.a.46)

La Sainte Bible contenant le Vieil et Nouveau Testament (Paris: J. du Puys, 1587), (C513, B1587puy(2); BL 463.f.10)

La Bible, qui est toute la Sainte Escriture du Vieil et du Nouveau Testament: Autrement l'Anciene et la Nouvelle Alliance. Le tout reveu et conferé sur les textes Hebrieux et Grecs par les Pasteurs et Professeurs de l'Eglise de Geneve (Geneva: [J. des Planches], 1588), (C515, B1588geneve(fol); BL L.12.e.8, BL L.12.f.6, Bod A.5.10.Th, Durham UL Howard B41)

La Bible, qui est toute la Sainte Escriture du Vieil et du Nouveau Testament: Autrement l'Anciene et la Nouvelle Alliance. Le tout reveu et conferé sur les textes Hebrieux et Grecs par les Pasteurs et Professeurs de l'Eglise de Geneve (Geneva: [J. des Planches], 1588), (C518, B1588geneve(80); Bod Bib.Fr.1588.f.1)

La Sainte Bible, Contenant le Vieil et Nouveau Testament. Traduicte de Latin en François par les Theologiens de l'Université de Louvain, comme appert par l'Epistre suivante d'un des premiers Docteurs d'icelle. Reveuë diligemment, et de nouveau corrigee oultre les precedantes impressions. Avec une docte Table, faicte Française de la Latine de M. Jean Harlemius Docteur en ladicté Université de la Compagnie de Jesus. Derniere Edition (Lyons: G. Jullieron, 1599), (C542, B1599-98jul; Bod 4° O. 5. Th. Seld)

ii) Other Bibles

†Benedictus, Johannes,³ *Biblia sacra Veteris et Novi Testamenti, juxta vulgatam, quam dicunt, editionem: Joannis Benedicti theologi industria accuratè recognita et emendata [...]* In hac autem editione [...] haec quattuor sunt adjecta scilicet, commentariorum accurate recognitio et amplificatio: Tertius liber Machabaeorum: [...] sententiarum et rerum [...] index [...]: Denique exquisita stromata in universum corpus biblicum quadruplici tum materia, tum libro distincta, in quibus proposita christianae religionis hoc tempore controversa ex ipso verbo Dei explicantur et dissoluuntur. Authore Renato Benedicto [...] (Lutetiae: apud J. Macaeum, 1564-65), (PQ156, PQ19; BL L.13.d.4, Bod Radcl.b.1)

——— *Biblia sacra Veteris et Novi Testamenti juxta vulgatam editionem [...]* (Paris: S. Nyvelle, 1573), (see PQ156; Durham Ushaw I.D.5.5)

Biblia sacra, cum glossa ordinaria [...], 6 vols (Antwerp: apud J. Keerbergium, 1617), (Durham UL Cosin A.I.13)

Biblia sacra vulgatae editionis Sixti V pontificis maximi jussu recognita et Clementis VIII auctoritate edita (Paris: Librairie Garnier Frères, 1868)

Carroll, Robert, and Stephen Prickett, eds, *The Bible: Authorized King James Version* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997)

³ For Jean Benoît (Johannes Benedictus), see, for instance, Pasquier, *Un curé de Paris*, p. 89, n. 2. For René Benoist's connection to this work, see my Chapter 3, note 242.

c) Books of Hours, including those edited by Benoist

Books of Hours are listed chronologically and then by publisher. I supply the full titles of editions to which I specifically refer in my thesis and those in the vernacular. Otherwise, I indicate Use, place of publication, publisher and year of publication, if possible. It should be understood that the year of publication is often an approximation, particularly in the case of the earliest editions; however, shelf-marks are always provided.

Manuscripts

Oxford, Bod, MS Rawl.liturg.f.26, [Hours for the Use of Rome] (France, [1504?])

Oxford, Bod, MS Rawl.liturg.e.36, [Hours for the Use of Rome] (France, first quarter of the sixteenth century)

Oxford, Bod, MS (Canonici) liturg.178, [Hours for the Use of Rome] (France, first quarter of the sixteenth century)

Oxford, Bod, MS Douce 19, [Hours for the Use of Rome] (France, first half of the sixteenth century)

Oxford, Bod, MS Douce 135, [Hours for the Use of Rome] (France, first half of the sixteenth century)

Oxford, Bod, MS Rawl.liturg.f.33, [Hours for the Use of Rome] (France, 1566)

Printed material

[Office of the Virgin Mary] (Venice: N. Jenson, 1474), (BL G. 11662)

[Office of the Virgin Mary] ([Naples]: [M. Moravus], 1478), (Bod Arch. B f.43)

[Hours] ([Poitiers]: [J. Bouyer], [1480?]), (BL IA. 42815 (fragment))

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: J. du Pré, 1488), (BL IA. 39821)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] ([n.p.]: J. de Prato, [1488?]), (BL IA. 39817)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: A. Vérard, 1489), (BL IA. 41096)

[Hours] (Paris: A. Vérard, 1489), (Bowes 090/Ho)

A la louenge de Dieu, de sa tressaincte et glorieuse mere, et a l'edification de tous bons catholiques, furent commencees ces presentes heures par le commandement du roy nostre sire (Paris: A. Vérard, [1490?]), (BL IB. 41113)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] ([Paris]: [par J. P. de Cruzenach] pour T. Kerver, [1497?]), (JR 10793)

Heures de Nostre Dame en francoys et en latin. Imprimees a Paris nouvellement (Paris: A. Vérard, [1497?]), Use of Paris, Latin-French, (Bod Douce BB 130)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] ([Paris]: T. Kerver, [1498]), (JR 15444)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] ([Paris]: par T. Kerver pour G. Remacle, 1500), (Bowes 090/Ke)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: A. Vérard, 1500), (JR 16371)

[Hours for the Use of Angers] ([n.p.]: [n.pub.], [c.1500?]), (Bowes 090/Ho)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: par P. Pigouchet pour S. Vostre, 1502), (JR 11498)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: par T. Kerver pour G. Remacle, 1505), (JR 18496)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: T. Kerver, 1507), (Bowes 090/Ho)

Heures a l'usaige de Romme tout au long sans riens requerir. Avec les figures de l'apocalypse et plusieurs aultres hystoires: tant de l'Ancien que du Nouveau Testament. Nouvellement imprimees a Paris (Paris: Gillet Hardouyn, [1510]), (JR 17331)

Hore beate Marie Virginis secundum usum Romanum sine require ([Paris]: [A. Vérard], [1511?]), (Durham Chapter H.IIB.50)

[Hours for the Use of Paris] (Paris: S. Vostre, [1515?]), (Durham Ushaw XVIII.F.7.20)

Les Heures Nostre Dame a l'usaige de Romme nouvellement translateez de latin en françoys (Paris: J. de Brie, [1520?]), French, (BL C.30.e.39)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: Germain Hardouyn, [1520?]), (Durham UL Routh S.R. 8.D.13)

[Hours for the Use of Verdun] (Paris: S. Vostre, [1520?]), (JR 16413)

Heures nouvellement imprimees a l'usage de Meaulx au long avec plusieurs belles hystoires nouvellement imprimees a Paris (Paris: J. de Brie, [1521?]). (BL C.46.d.19.(1.))

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: Germain Hardouyn, [1523]), (JR R4483)

Heures de Nostre Dame translatees en francoys et mises en rihtme [sic] par Pierre Gregoire dict Vaudemont herault d'armes de treshault et vertueulx prince monseigneur le duc de Lorraine, de Bar, et de Calabre, par le commandement de haulte et noble princesse ma dame Regnee de Bourbon, duchesse de Lorraine. Avec le privilege du roy nostre sire donne pour troys ans audict Vaudemont mys dens se present cayer ([Paris]: J. Petit, [1525?]), Latin-French, (BL C.24.a.26, Bod Douce M 655(2))

Heures de Nostre Dame, translatees de latin en francoys et mises en ryme, additionnees de plusieurs chantz royaulx figurez et moralisez, sur les misteres miraculeux de la passion de nostre redempteur Jesuchrist, avec plusieurs belles oraisons et rondeaux contemplatifz, composez par Pierre Gringoire dict Vaudemont, herault d'armes de treshault et vertueux prince monseigneur le duc de Lorraine, de Bar, et de Calabre, par le commandement de haulte et noble princesse ma dame Regnee de Bourbon, duchesse de Lorraine, avec nouveau privilege prologe audit Pierre Gringoire, jusques a quatre ans ensuyvans comme il appert cy apres (Paris: J. Petit, [1528?]), Latin-French, (BL C.29.i.15)

[Hours, Sarum Use] (Paris: F. Regnault, 1530), (Durham UL Cosin S.R. 9.B.4)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: G. Tory, 1531), (JR 13424)

Heures de Nostre Dame, translatees de latin en francoys et mises en ryme, additionnees de plusieurs chantz royaulx figurez et moralisez, sur les misteres miraculeux de la passion de nostre redempteur Jesuchrist, avec plusieurs belles oraisons et rondeaux contemplatifz, composez par Pierre Gringoire dict Vaudemont, herault d'armes de treshault et vertueux prince monseigneur le duc de Lorraine, de Bar, et de Calabre. Par le commandement de haulte et noble princesse ma dame Regnee de Bourbon, duchesse de Lorraine, avec nouveau privilege prologe audit Pierre Gringoire, jusques a quatre ans ensuyvans comme il appert cy apres (Paris: J. Petit, [1534?]), Latin-French, (Bod Douce BB 152)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: G. Merlin, 1547), (BL C.52.c.4.(1.))

[Hours for the Use of Rouen] (Paris: T. Kerver, 1551), (BL C.46.c.14)

Heures de Nostre Dame en francoys et en latin, à l'usage de Rome, nouvellement imprimées à Paris (Paris: M. Boursette, 1554), Latin-French, (BL C.109.e.45)

[Hours for the Use of Paris] (Paris: T. Kerver, 1554), (Bod Auct. T inf.3.14)

Heures de Nostre Dame à l'usage de Romme en latin et en françois, nouvellement imprimées à Paris (Paris: par J. Amazeur pour G. Merlin, 1555 [colophon 1556]), Latin-French, (Bod Douce BB 14(1))

Heures en françoys et latin à l'usage de Rome, corrigées et augmentées de plusieurs suffrages et oraisons. Avec figures nouvelles, appropriées chascune en son lieu (Lyons: M. Bonhomme, 1558), Latin-French, (Bod Douce BB 124)

[Hours for the Use of Paris] (Paris: J. Kerver, 1558), (Bod Douce BB 103)

[Hours for the Use of Paris] (Paris: J. Kerver, 1559), (BL C.69.b.5)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: apud J. Macaeum, 1559), (Bod Radcl. g.7)

Heures de Nostre Dame, a l'usage de Rome, en latin, et en françois (Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1565), Latin-French, (BL C.107.b.36.(1.))

Heures de Nostre Dame, a l'usage de Romme, nouvellement imprimees a Paris (Paris: P. Ricoart, 1566), (BL C.47.c.16.(1.))

Heures de Nostre Dame a l'usage de Rome nouvellement imprimees a Paris, avec plusieurs belles histoires, tant au calendrier, aux heures Nostre Dame, aux heures de la croix, aux heures du Saint Esprit, aux sept psalmes, que aux vigiles (Paris: J. Kerver, 1569), (Harris Manchester X1569/5)

†*Heures de Nostre Dame, en françois a l'usage de Rome, nouvellement reveues, corrigees et augmentees, par M. René Benoist Angevin, docteur regent en la Faculté de Theologie* (Paris: par J. le Blanc pour J. Kerver, 1569), French, (BL C.64.c.11)

†*Heures de Nostre Dame en latin et en françois a l'usage de Rome, nouvellement reueües, corrigées et augmentées, par M. René Benoist Angevin, docteur regent en la Faculté de Theologie à Paris* (Paris: par J. le Blanc pour J. Kerver, 1569), Latin-French, (PH 71.27 a8)

[Hours for the Use of Sens] (Sens: par J. Savine pour J. de la Mare, 1569), (BL C.35.b.1)

[Hours for the Use of Troyes] (Troyes: J. Lecoq, [1569?]), (Bod Douce BB 60)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1570), (BL C.29.f.18)

Officium b. Mariae Virginis, nuper reformatum, et Pii. V. pont. max. iussu editum. Cum privilegio, et indulgentiis (Rome: in Aedibus Populi Romani, 1571), (BL C.65.k.9)

Heures, a l'usage de Rome, nouvellement imprimees a Paris (Paris: G. Merlin, [1571?]), (BL C.30.i.4.(1.))

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: J. Kerver, 1573), (Bod Douce BB 92(1))

Officium b. Mariae Virginis, nuper reformatum, et Pii. V. pont. max. iussu editum (Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1573) (BL C.111.c.28, Bod Douce BB 158)

Officium b. Mariae Virginis, nuper reformatum, et Pii. V. pont. max. iussu editum (Venice: J. Gryphius, 1574), (Bod Broxb. 11.20)

[Hours for the Use of Paris] (Paris: J. Kerver, 1575), (Bod Douce CC 212)

[Hours for the Use of Rome] (Paris: G. Merlin, 1575), (Bod Douce BB 84(1))

Officium b. Mariae Virginis, nuper reformatum, et Pii. V. pont. max. iussu editum (Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1575), (BL C.46.d.3, BL C.46.f.5, BL C.66.c.16, Bod 8° O 9 Th.)

†*Heures de Nostre Dame a l'usage de Rome en latin et en françois, nouvellement imprimées, reveuës et corrigées de nouveau outre les autres precedentes impressions. Par M. René Benoist docteur regent en la Faculté de Theologie, et curé de S. Eustache, à Paris* (Paris: G. Buon, 1580), Latin-French, (Christ Church Oq.6.22)

[Hours for the Use of Paris] (Paris: J. Duval, 1582), (BL C.48.c.9.(1.))

[Office of the Virgin Mary] (Venice: apud Juntas, 1584), (Bod Douce BB 72)

[Hours for the Use of Paris] (Paris: G. de la Noue, [1585?]), (BL C.35.a.22)

[Office of the Virgin Mary] (Antwerp: ex officina Plantiniana, apud Viduam et J. Moretum, 1591), (BL 1492.aa.26)

Officium beatae Mariae Virginis, Pii V. pont. max. iussu editum. Cum calend. greg. a S. D. N. Sixto PP. V. aliquot s.s. festis aucto (Antwerp: ex officina Plantiniana, apud Viduam et J. Moretum, 1593), (Bod 8° C 440 Linc.)

[Hours for the Use of Paris] (Paris: G. de la Noue, 1594), (Bod Douce BB 25)

L'Office de la Vierge Mariae a l'usage de l'Eglise romaine. Avec plusieurs belles prieres chrestiennes et catholiques. Reveus et corriges de nouveau (Paris: J. Mettayer, J. Houzé, et G. Drobet, 1595), Latin-French, (Bod Douce BB 217(1))

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